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Historical Perspectives



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Cover Photo

Photo of a 1975 Carlo Robelli copy of a Gibson SG Custom electric guitar

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The Historical Perspectives Peer Review Process

Historical Perspectives is a peer-reviewed publication of the History Department at Santa Clara University. It showcases student work that is selected for innovative research, theoretical sophistication, and elegant writing. Consequently, the caliber of submissions must be high to qualify for publication. Each year, two student editors and two faculty advisors evaluate the submissions.

Assessment is conducted in several stages. An initial reading of submissions by the four editors and advisors establishes a short-list of the top papers. The assessment criteria in this process, as stated above, focus on the papers' level of research innovation, theoretical sophistication, and elegance of presentation. No one category is privileged over the others and strengths in one can be considered corrective for deficiencies in another. The complete panel of four editors and advisors then votes on the final selections. Occasionally, as needed, authors may be asked to shorten or edit their original submissions for re-submission.

Historical Perspectives

Journal of History

2011

Published by
Santa Clara University Lambda Upsilon Chapter
of Phi Alpha Theta

Student Editors
Kathleen O'Rourke
Jacqueline Stotlar

Faculty Advisors
Professor Fabio Lopez-Lazaro
Professor Amy Randall

Volume XVI of *Historical Perspectives* is the twenty-first journal published by Santa Clara University's Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. This edition continues the tradition of providing its readers with

articles that reflect the caliber of student scholarship
at Santa Clara.

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Introduction

Historical Perspectives is an undergraduate journal annually published by the Lambda Upsilon Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. Each year students are invited to submit their best work in hopes of selection, and the resulting publication showcases the exemplary work of History Department students. The high caliber of work this year made the selection process challenging, and we would like to take the time to thank the students who submitted papers. All of these essays reflected the breadth and depth of the department's research, and were written testaments to the fact that history is not a passive discipline, but rather an active process of creativity, research and insight.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel once said, "The history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom." While overarching themes do not always emerge in a given issue of *Historical Perspectives*, we discovered that the themes of freedom, and the sacrifices it requires, were common threads weaving through this year's selections. Freedom itself is a deeply powerful yet vague concept. It means very different things to different people. The ten papers featured in this year's publication, organized

chronologically, are meant to share glimpses of the various meanings of the word freedom. Freedom of the body has a strong presence in the essay on male homosexuality, as well as in the separate articles on prostitution. Other pieces in this year's issue explore the struggle women faced to gain freedom at the turn of the twentieth century. The remaining papers examine aspects of freedom during and after war. We hope that upon completion of reading this journal you will have a better grasp of what the word freedom means in a historical sense to different peoples, of varying times and places, and the inevitable sacrifices that come with true understanding and pursuit of the concept.

We would like to thank all those who continue to make this undergraduate journal possible: faculty, staff, and students. The opportunities to be published as an undergraduate are few, and we hope this publication will continue to serve as an avenue for achievement and pride for all Santa Clara history students.

Kathleen O'Rourke
Jacqueline Stotlar
Student Editors

Dedication

We dedicate this issue to the outgoing Chair of
the History Department

Barbara Molony
and welcome the incoming Chair
Arthur Liebscher, SJ

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank

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and all of those faculty whose advice and
mentoring contributed to the papers published
herein.

Jacqueline Stotlar
Kathleen O'Rourke
Student Editors

Acceptance through Restriction: Male Homosexuality in Ancient Athens

Brigid Kelleher

When investigating any culture, sex and sexuality are always important keys in understanding the society. In modern America, sex is everywhere, but there are limits on the kind of sex that can be portrayed. While the limits on heterosexuality are defined, the United States continues to struggle to accept homosexuality. Debates remain today regarding the rights and liberties of homosexuals. For instance, same-sex marriage is a critical issue in American politics. Despite the prevalence of homosexuality throughout its history, the United States government is officially accepting homosexuality only now—in certain arenas and with certain restrictions. As described in the *New York Times*, “[those] opposed to same-sex marriage agree that marriage is a fundamental bond with ancient roots.”¹ While this might be true, what those opposed to same-sex marriage seem to omit is the historical prevalence of homosexuality. Homosexuality is a natural condition, handled differently by different societies—some have a recognized acceptance, even thinking it in ways noble. To use historical evidence in contemporary debates that immediately affect the rights of the population, it is imperative that facts be checked and the truth be told.

¹ The New York Times, “Same-Sex Marriage, Civil Unions, and Domestic Partnerships,” *The New York Times*, <http://tinyurl.com/yhrhm8u> (accessed 10 January 2011).

Ancient Greece, and specifically Athens, is well known for its tolerance of homosexuality. In Sir Kenneth J. Dover's *Greek Homosexuality* (1978), Dover differentiates ancient Greek homosexuality from modern by observing Greek culture's "readiness to recognize the alternation of homosexual and heterosexual preferences in the same individual [and] its implicit denial that such alternation or coexistence created peculiar problems for the individual or for society."² Dover claims that ancient Greek society accepted homosexuality because it was permissible by older generations.³ Dover's work is an in-depth analysis of homosexuality, using copious primary sources with the majority of the evidence from Athens. Dover's work is a very useful source, and provides much specific evidence on social rules that governed homosexual relations in Athens.

Like Dover, James Davidson provides an extensive overview of homosexuality in ancient Greece in *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Radical Reappraisal of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece* (2008). Most significantly, Davidson dedicates the first portion of his work to the etymology of the ancient Greek words for love, grace, to favor, and other terms used to define relationships in ancient Greece. As Davidson describes, dissecting these words helps to avoid "a minefield of possible misunderstandings and embarrassments" when explicating the complicated relationships in

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ancient Greece.⁴ This section of Davidson's work provides a useful analysis to reading primary sources regarding homosexuality in ancient Athens.

Other scholars find the study of law a rich field for their research. John J. Winkler's collection of essays, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (1990), examines various topics of homosexuality in order to show how sexuality and gender influenced an ancient Athenian's daily life. Winkler's second chapter, "Laying Down the Law: The Oversight of the Men's Sexual Behavior in Classical Athens," provides the most pertinent information, particularly in its treatment of the ever-present competition among males and the moral weight given to self-control.⁵ Winkler sets up the chapter by defining the "cultural images of right and wrong manhood," comparing the hoplite, the citizen-soldier who can afford his own armor and is of sound mind enough to protect his state and his home, with the *kinaidos*, "a man socially deviant in his entire being, principally observable in behavior that flagrantly violated...the dominant social definition of masculinity."⁶ He offers a number of examples from laws and trials in front of the Athenian Assembly to illustrate the way in which Athenians distinguished the two. A hoplite was a model citizen, while a *kinaidos* was a self-destructive fool within ancient Athenian society.

⁴ James Davidson, *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Radical Reappraisal of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece* (London: Phoenix, 2008), 11.

⁵ John J. Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire: The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (NY: Routledge, 1990), 45.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 45-6.

Simon Goldhill's *Love, Sex and Tragedy: How the Ancient World Shapes Our Lives* (1992) supplements Winkler's work by considering the specifics of homosexual courtship within the restrictions of self-control. Through primary sources, Goldhill examines the rituals of the gymnasium culture and the practice of pederasty, a homosexual relationship between an older male and a teenage boy who has not yet reached full maturity. He links this to the ancient Greek venerations of the phallus, which exalted the male, demeaned the female, and nurtured a cult of the perfect male physique. As Goldhill points out, to have a poor physique was considered to be irresponsible and amoral. One had to "exercise hard, or suffer the humiliation of a bad body, which [meant] being a bad citizen."⁷ Goldhill also presents other material on sexual practices and on female inferiority that reinforce his interpretation.

Like Goldhill, Joseph R. Laurin uses archaeological discoveries and ancient literature to provide a concise rubric for *Homosexuality in Ancient Athens* (2005). Laurin devotes each section of his book to a specific characteristic of homosexual love in ancient Athens, including pederasty, effeminacy, and lesbianism. As many scholars have, Laurin analyzes such texts as Plato's *Symposium* to reveal the ancient Athenian sentiment toward the practices of homosexuality. In his "Epilogue," Laurin declares that the lack of primary sources on homosexuality in ancient Athens leaves a gap between what actually happened between homo-

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sexual couples, and what we think happened.⁸ It is clear, however, “that homosexuality was neither queer nor threatening but normal and equal in the men’s free and open society.”⁹ Despite the small pool for primary sources on homosexual interactions in ancient Athens, the idea that it was permissible in specific parameters is definite.

What were these specific parameters in ancient Athens? A dialogue such as the *Symposium* defines homosexuality in its most noble light. Like modern times, what society might agree to be the most moral form of any given institution or tradition, might not actually describe how it was practiced. This discrepancy in ancient Athens regarding homosexuality is key in linking modern debates about homosexuality to the past. It is the purpose of this study to compare the philosophic justification of homosexuality in ancient Athens in Plato’s *Symposium* with the restrictions and penalties imposed by Athenian law on certain extremes of homosexual behavior to reveal the profound anxiety ancient Athenians felt regarding the destructive potential of this practice.

It is important to understand the different manifestations of “love” in ancient Athens. There were different categories for desire, and not all applied to proper homosexual relationships. Among others, *philia* and *eros* were such categories of “love” that played the most significant role in ancient Athenian homosexual desire. *Philia* included “all close relationships, family members, business partners, coevals, dear ones and

⁸ Joseph R. Laurin, *Homosexuality in Ancient Athens* (Victoria, British Columbia: Trafford Publishing, 2005), 171.

⁹ Ibid.

lovers, as well as friends.”¹⁰ *Philia* was a rational and intimate kind of love that conveyed respect and reciprocity. It was the “active direct engagement with the beloved,” involving both parties in a relationship.¹¹ *Philia* was the goal, that *eros* inspired.

Eros, which originally appeared “to have been a specifically Athenian (‘Attic’) term,” was the all-intoxicating sexual urge one had for another.¹² It entranced its victim to pursue with a “particular kind of targeting energy.”¹³ *Eros*, which was a one-sided ordeal only experienced by the pursuer, transformed a person into an obsessive hunter from a distance, who was desperately in love with the pursued.¹⁴ This engulfing form of love, when properly displayed, created a “servile-looking but [honorable] and competitive devotion,” which hoped to reel in the pursued and culminate in *philia*.¹⁵ *Eros* could have been extremely destructive as a social force, if it was allowed to gain so much momentum for a citizen to lose self-control.¹⁶ As described by Sophocles, “*Eros* [dragged] the minds of just men into injustice and destruction,” and needed to be carefully monitored to avoid public humiliation and shame.¹⁷

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Eros was not simply a word, but it was also the name of a deity. Ancient Athenians could blame their heartache on Eros, Aphrodite's son (the Roman Cupid). Eros struck from a distance and consumed his target, "goading...with his whip [and] driving [his victim] mad."¹⁸ Eros' inspiration was an assault that ruthlessly pained the victim. For *eros* to result in *philia* was supremely gratifying after a long, torturous struggle. Despite the torture Eros might inflict, characters in Plato's *Symposium* declared that Eros did not get his due credit from the Athenian citizens.

According to Goldhill, "Plato [used] *eros* in his dialogue the *Symposium* to express the highest philosophical longings for the Good Itself, longings which [transcended] the physical and [sought] the fulfillment of the soul's deepest needs and capabilities."¹⁹ Plato's philosophical depictions of homosexuality, therefore, were void of carnal corruption. In the dialogue, Eryximachus, a guest at the banquet for Agathon's prize for tragic poetry, proposes that the group "make a speech in honor of [the god] Love."²⁰ Of the speeches then made, three particularly stand out: those of Pausanias, Aristophanes, and Socrates. Pausanias declares that there are two Loves spawned from two Aphrodites.²¹ One goddess Aphrodite was born of the union between Zeus and Dione, a male and a female. Love that is produced from this Aphrodite is "common."²² The second goddess Aphrodite, however, was

¹⁸Davidson, *The Greeks and Greek Love*, 14.

¹⁹ Goldhill, *Love, Sex and Tragedy*, 48.

²⁰ Plato, *The Symposium*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1956), 19.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

²² *Ibid.*

born of Uranus, a man, only. The love produced from her is called "heavenly."²³ With disdain, Pausanias explains that common Love "has no discrimination...and is of the body rather than of the soul."²⁴ Common Love was lustful, casual, and careless fornication. To Pausanias, common Love would lead a man to women and (male) youths too young to pursue, and that a practitioner of common Love "[did] good and evil quite indiscriminately."²⁵ Heavenly Love, on the other hand, inspired the male to "turn to the male, and delight in him who is the more valiant and intelligent nature."²⁶ Heavenly Love caught the hearts of men who saw youths as intelligent persons in whom reason was beginning to be developed.²⁷ Men engulfed by heavenly Love did not deceive these youths, but intended to remain their companions, if not lovers, for life. In such a pursuit, the pursuer "[endured] a slavery worse than any slave," that to Eros.²⁸ To be such a slave, however, did not matter to the scores of men who devoted themselves to boys on the verge of adulthood. As Pausanias explains, "a man fairly argues that in Athens to love and to be loved is held to be a very honorable thing."²⁹ Heavenly Love was a noble and commendable form of Eros, which disregarded a one-time lustful tryst instead for an everlasting disposition.

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Aristophanes gave his praise to love in a tale of the origin of man. Originally, there were three sexes: male, female, and “the union of the two.”³⁰ This third sex was “Androgynous” (“Andros” man + “gyne” woman), an upright creature that had “four hands and four feet, one head with two faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely alike.”^{31, 32} As the humans grew too proud, however, Zeus decided to split the Androgynous in half as “a lesson of humility.”³³ Henceforth, the halves could only embrace each other in attempts to reunite as they had before. Fortunately for humanity, all sexes could still procreate.³⁴ Aristophanes briefly explained that future generations of men who came from “Androgynous” were lovers of women, lustful and potentially adulterous. Women who came from the part of the woman were only attracted to other women. The men who came from the part of man were only attracted to other men. These “slices of the original man” are both “valiant and manly,” for “they embrace that which is like them.”³⁵ These men understood the importance, superiority, and value of the male, who was superior to the female. They embraced the adult male as a youth, and they in turn would share their love with a youth when they were adults. These men were statesmen, virtuous in deed and followed the law. They procured lasting relationships with their other halves.³⁶ Should

³⁰ Ibid., 30.

³¹ Laurin, *Homosexuality in Ancient Times*, 33.

³² Plato, *The Symposium*, 30.

³³ Ibid., 31.

³⁴ Ibid., 32.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

they have married a woman, they would have done so only to abide by Athenian law because they were honorable citizens. Aristophanes concluded his speech by praising the righteous men who love men, and instructed his friends that in order to ever find their other half, they would need to be just as righteous and virtuous as the original homosexual man who was the model citizen.

Socrates instructed his friends through the mechanism of a woman from his youth: Diotima of Mantinea. After asserting that Eros was a daemon, an intermediary between the gods and humans, she began to interchange the words “beautiful” and “good.”^{37, 38} When Diotima spoke of “good,” she meant the moral and virtuous. She was referring to the same sort of honor that Pausanias bestowed upon men who devoted themselves to intelligent youths, and that Aristophanes bestowed upon similar men who would find their other half only in other men. Diotima declared that the happy desire the noble, and that “all desire of good and happiness is only the great and subtle power of love.”³⁹ Love is moral and virtuous, and a lover should only find a beloved if the beloved, too, be virtuous and honorable. This love, then, is “of the everlasting possession of the good.”⁴⁰ Like Pausanias and Aristophanes, Love implied a lifelong commitment. Men then sought out virtuous souls to beget children (thus, in this instance, women), so that their own virtue might be immortalized through their

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offspring.⁴¹ As he matured, this male offspring would be “guided by his instructor,” to seek out in the world “the beauty of the mind,” which, “[was] more honorable than the beauty of the outward form.”⁴² This could only be found in the male. When he approached a virtuous soul, “he [would] be content to love and tend him,” and would encourage this youth intellectually.⁴³ The male offspring, then, in turn became the instructor after he matured, “[compelling his pupil] to contemplate and see the beauty of institutions and laws.”⁴⁴ As such, love was virtuous and recurred through the generations. The female’s role was to beget children, imprints of virtuous souls. The male’s role was to make a boy a man through the same tender guidance and devotion that Pausanias and Aristophanes preached regarding youths.

According to Plato, however, this story of Diotima of Mantinea was not all that Socrates had to offer in terms of understanding Eros. With the conclusion of Socrates’ speech, a late invitee arrived: Alcibiades, who was already drunk. With liquid courage, Alcibiades began to divulge his homoerotic passion for Socrates. Alcibiades echoed the torture of Eros when he described his longing for Socrates as suffering and agony, and declared that he “was at [his] wit’s end; no one was ever more hopelessly enslaved by another.”⁴⁵ Alcibiades’ passion was not based on material goods or superficial looks, however (especially since Socrates was infamously ugly). Instead, Alcibiades confessed he

⁴¹ Ibid., 50.

⁴² Ibid., 51.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Plato, *The Symposium*, 60.

was drawn to an indefinable quality in Socrates, a feeling connected to Socrates' ability to "assist [him] in the way of virtue."⁴⁶ He felt he would have been a fool to have withheld any favors from Socrates. As his *eros* for Socrates developed, Alcibiades admitted, he had become the pursuer even though he was the youth. This was the opposite protocol of homosexual courtship, which the previous orators described. He sent away his attendant to steal moments alone with Socrates and challenged Socrates to wrestling matches in the *palaestra*.⁴⁷ Socrates, however, handled all these encounters with "natural temperance and self-restraint and manliness."⁴⁸ Their most physically intimate moment was sleeping in one another's arms. (Alcibiades never mentioned copulation.) Alcibiades seems to be presented at this point in the *Symposium* to illustrate the distinction between philosophy and reality. Whereas Pausanias, Aristophanes, and Socrates preached the magnificence of *eros* and its various manifestations using myth or theory, Alcibiades presented an autobiographical anecdote about pederasty. Despite what Pausanias, Aristophanes, and Socrates argued, pederasty and homosexual relationships were highly restricted within ancient Athens. Their philosophic justifications described a society of open sexuality, in which carnal desire of an adult male could not corrupt his intentions when pursuing a homosexual relationship. In reality, however, social and legal restrictions in ancient Athens described how love could be corrupt and

needed to be regulated. Philosophy was very different from practice.

Pederasty, the common motif in the *Symposium*, was the sexual and emotional relationship between an older male and a teenage boy that was distinguished from pedophilia by having had a “noble purpose.”⁴⁹ The elder partner was the *erastes* (lover) and the younger partner was the *eromenos* (beloved).⁵⁰ In ancient Athens, “the approved homosexual relations [were] not between social equals,” which made the age discrepancy between the two lovers vital in the formation of the relationship.⁵¹ One partner was always superior to the other. Social restrictions defined the boundaries of the age of the *eromenos*: “Pederastic partnership was considered reprehensible before the boy was twelve years of age, preferable at about the age of fifteen, and terminated or adapted to a new style after the age of eighteen when the boy’s beard was fully grown.”⁵² As the *Symposium* described, pederasty was based on a mentorship, although physical attraction sparked an *erastes*’ interest. “As a general rule, the *erastes* mentored the boy in right and wrong, helped him develop good character, self-control..., wisdom, and provided other forms of education, including initiation into the society.”⁵³ An *erastes* taught by example through public decorum, and also engaged in

⁴⁹ Laurin, *Homosexuality in Ancient Athens*, 74.

⁵⁰ Goldhill, *Love, Sex and Tragedy*, 56-7.

⁵¹ John Thorp, “The Social Construction of Homosexuality,” *Phoenix*, Vol. 46 (1992): 59.

⁵² Laurin, *Homosexuality in Ancient Athens*, 76.

⁵³ Marina Fischer, “Sport Objects and Homosexuality in Ancient Greek Vase-Painting: The New Reading of Tampa Museum Vase 86.70,” *Nikephoros* 20 (2007):165.

philosophic and intellectual discourse with his *eromenos*. *Erastai* took *eromenoi* to aristocratic *symposia*, and even introduced the *eromenoi* to heterosexual intercourse by taking them to prostitutes.⁵⁴ Thus, the relationship was not only about sexual pleasure for the *erastes*. “Pederastic education included developing in the boy sexual habits consonant with manly virtue,” however, and this included the greatest favor an *eromenos* could grant in gratitude for his mentorship: “intercrural intercourse, i.e. between the thighs.”^{55, 56}

The majority of these relationships originated in the gymnasium, which was the social and athletic center for Athens’ elite, and was restricted to its free male citizens. All athletics within the gymnasium were practiced naked “to showcase the beauty of young male bodies in motion.”⁵⁷ *Gymnos* meant “naked.”⁵⁸ The gymnasium provided the opportunity for older males to gather and converse, while it provided younger males the opportunity to show their worth in physical activity. Because winning an athletic event made a youth more attractive to potential lovers, older men soon became admirers from afar of certain youths who put their “masculinity on trial.”^{59, 60} Any moral or dutiful citizen honed his body in the gymnasium in preparation to become a hoplite, a citizen-soldier and model citizen. Hoplites had to be physically fit in order

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to fight on the battlefield. With every athletic victory in the gymnasium, the youths gained increased honor for themselves as they grew into citizens who would one day protect Athens. This honor transferred to everyday life, as the youths were also seen as potential defenders of their *oikoi* (households).⁶¹ Thus, hoplites demonstrated their acceptance of duty and responsibility to the polis. Within this military context, pederastic mentors, or *erastai*, were therefore considered to be sculpting the minds of these potential defenders of home and society, who would one day contribute positively to the polis.

Men and youths did not simply pair off, however. There were laws regulating the public access to young males. "Teachers were not to open their schools, nor trainers their gymnasiums, before sunrise, and must close them before sunset."⁶² This Athenian law protected male youths from sexual predators, who might have lurked during the twilight hours. It was not appropriate for a male citizen to merely grab a boy at will, especially a boy who would have eventually become an Athenian citizen. "A law stated who should be the young men who attended [schools and gymnasiums], and of what ages they should be, and what control of them there should be."⁶³ Such a law prohibited men of a certain maturity from co-mingling with the youth of Athens. This law also prescribed that these young men should have escorts to take them to and from school and the gymnasium. These escorts,

⁶¹ Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire*, 47.

⁶² Douglas M. MacDowell, "Athenian Laws about Homosexuality," *Revue Internationale des droits de L'Antiquité*, 3^{ème} série (2000): 15.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 16.

normally slaves, could act as witnesses of a boy's conduct, or of the conduct of a man who approached the boy. Escorts would therefore have been deterrents to any lewd and lascivious behavior that might embarrass a boy's family or ruin his reputation, a considerable concern because "[gossip], rumor, and common knowledge [were] very intense in a community like that of ancient Athens, even though it was a comparatively large polis."⁶⁴ Finally, of laws regarding the supervision of boys, "the chorus-producer [of an assembly of boys] had to be over forty years of age."⁶⁵ This law supposed that men over the age of forty had less "homoerotic impulses."⁶⁶ It forbade those younger than the required age to have any direct control over a group of youths. This protected youths from becoming the prey of unmarried or recently married men (since Athenian men were around thirty years old on their wedding day) who might have still sought to become an *erastes*.⁶⁷

Such laws protecting boys from sexual advances from older men betrayed an anxiety among the ancient Athenian legislators that homosexual eroticism would have corrupted the youth. At the very least, these laws suggest that introducing homosexuality to boys at that age would have done some kind of harm. Particularly, these laws prohibited acts of hubris, which broadly meant "any kind of [behavior] in which one [treated] other people just as one [pleased,] with an arrogant confidence that one [would have escaped] paying any

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penalty for violating [the rights of the victim].”⁶⁸ In ancient Athenian law, however, the crime of hubris was linked to sexual assault. If convicted, the accused faced the death penalty.⁶⁹ To convince a jury that the accused committed an act of hubris, the prosecution had to prove that the assailant committed the act of assault “from a wish on his part to establish a dominant position over his victim in the eyes of the community,” and “[laughed] at equality of rights under the law.”⁷⁰ Hubris, then, in accordance with the laws protecting the accessibility of young boys, was a sexual assault against the future generation of Athenian citizens, which implied that these boys were submissive and inferior. These two characteristics, submissiveness and inferiority, were reserved for women and slaves. To claim this insulted the Athenian state. Further, such laws were implemented out of a fear that this homosexual behavior would follow the boys into their maturity, as “Aristotle [applied] the same standard to boys when he [said] that some males [enjoyed] homosexual intercourse because they were subjected to hubris as boys.”⁷¹ A subtext running through Athenian law on these matters is the fear that such homosexual interaction would have left the upcoming generation, who would rule and progress the polis, submissive and inferior, which was antithetical of what the polis strove to be.

To avoid conviction of hubris, pederasty had to be engaged in as a type of noble courtship, in which the

⁶⁸ Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 34.

⁶⁹ David Cohen, “Law, Society and Homosexuality in Classical Athens,” *Past & Present*, No. 117 (Nov. 1987): 7.

⁷⁰ Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 35.

⁷¹ Cohen, “Law, Society and Homosexuality,” 8.

erastes wooed the *eromenos* into granting the former favors. Favors did not have to be sexual, however, it was generally presumed that the ultimate goal of the *erastes* was to succeed sexually with the lad.⁷² Because law prohibited men from directly engaging with youths, the interaction between potential *erastai* and *eromenoi* was that much more complicated, in that *erastai* had limited opportunities to impress an *eromenos*. Again, the gymnasium was a crucial nexus. As Dover explained,

“The gymnasium...provided opportunities for looking at naked boys, bringing oneself discreetly to a boy’s notice in the hope of eventually speaking to him... and even touching a boy in a suggestive way, as if by accident, while wrestling with him.”⁷³

The gymnasium, therefore, did not limit competition to physical recreation. Further, while the *erastes* pursued the *eromenos* with gifts, such as a hare, the *eromenos* was expected to remain chaste, and to refuse his pursuant.⁷⁴ *Eros* was supposed to be felt only by the *erastes*, and without reciprocation from the *eromenos*. The *erastes* hoped to procure *philia* within the *eromenos* through gifts, guidance and noble persistence.⁷⁵ An *eromenos* inspired by *philia* through admiration, gratitude, and compassion, granted the *erastes*’ favors (i.e., intercrural intercourse).⁷⁶ An

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eromenos did not sexually desire his *erastes*, but instead cultivated a bond with his *erastes*, as a mentor who delivered him into intellectual, political, social and sexual circles of knowledge. Homosexual intercourse between the two was an expression of this bond. As Aristophanes' speech illustrated, "the homosexual activity [was] an expression of something which [lay] deep in the soul," and was not a form of prostitution in return for the *erastes* guidance.⁷⁷

To not only avoid legal sanction, but also social ruin, the entire pederastic courtship, pre- and post-gratification, was to be done with self-control. Public behavior was to be "decorous and circumspect."⁷⁸ In the case of pederasty, should either party not work within the social and legal constructs of this courtship, respective peers of the couple would have vilified them in public, which could have ruined the reputation of the *eromenos/erastes* and his family and could have opened the *eromenos/erastes* and his family to blackmail.⁷⁹ Humiliation, ridicule, and blackmail were powerful disincentives to flamboyant public displays of homosexual relationships in ancient Athens.

Despite these powerful social and legal penalties, pederasty was commonly practiced in Athenian society, and was commonly accepted if it was done discreetly. Because family honor was on the line, so long as the *eromenos*' family did not think their name was being besmirched, intercourse between the couple was at their discretion. Through self-control and proper courtship in public arenas, an *erastes* and an

⁷⁷ Thorp, "The Social Construction of Homosexuality," 58.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Cohen, "Law, Society and Homosexuality," 19.

eromenos protected themselves from social and political ruin. These men (or boys to be men) were always fearful of their rights as free citizens, especially the right to speak in public and political forums, and the right to hold office. An unmanly man could be stripped of those rights. Men who could not control their desires and indulgences were the opposite of the hoplite citizen. They disgusted Athenians and were feared by them. Such a man was a *kinaidos*—a male prostitute. As Winkler described, “The three components of the accusation [of a *kinaidos* were] promiscuity, payment, and passivity to another man’s penetration.”⁸⁰

Kinaidoi were considered promiscuous because they no longer had control over their desires. While an *erastes* might have patiently waited for gratification, a *kinaidos* was rash and had sex whenever and with whomever he wanted. As a prostitute, *kinaidoi* accepted payment for the sexual use of their bodies. “[As] a symbol, the money pouch,” which was often found in vase-painting depictions of female prostitutes, “[reinforced] the man’s awareness of the victory of male over female, which formed the psychological basis of his existence.”⁸¹ By accepting payment a *kinaidos* was, therefore, a woman—effeminate and inferior. Paid *kinaidoi* willingly accepted the role of an inferior, which might accept defeat when faced with an outside military enemy. Through anal penetration, a *kinaidos* further submitted himself to the passive role of the

mounted woman. In the context of pederasty, “any penetration of a free boy would be called an outrage, a desecration,” because it made that boy a woman, who was not a citizen.⁸² If a *kinaidos* engaged in oral penetration, he was considered even lower in morals and honor. In ancient Athens, “any person who [allowed] his or her mouth to be used in such a way [was] thought quite disgusting.”⁸³ He was a vile being, void of virtue. Engaging in promiscuity, accepting payment, and being passive to penetration, marked a *kinaidos* as a reckless, effeminate threat to the proper citizen. His unmanliness threatened the safety of the entire polis, and protection of the polis was the ultimate purpose of every citizen.

The *kinaidos* was a sufficiently repellent figure that “to call anyone a [*kinaidos*] was a violently hostile act.”⁸⁴ Instead of mastering his desires, a *kinaidos* was a slave to them, and therefore the opposite of a proper male soldier-citizen.⁸⁵ While *heitarai*, or female courtesans, existed for men without any social disgrace or general penalty under Athenian law, there were laws prohibiting male prostitution.⁸⁶, ⁸⁷ Further, most male and female prostitutes were destitute and not citizens, marking a *kinaidos* that much more pathetic and

⁸² Goldhill, *Love, Sex and Tragedy*, 64.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 58.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁸⁶ Martin, *Ancient Greece*, 139.

⁸⁷ Athenian law stated that any father who prostituted his son “had deprived the son of his freedom of speech,” and therefore, the son was free from providing for his father in the latter’s old age. Any citizen who procured a free boy could be sentenced to death. MacDowell, “Athenian Laws about Homosexuality,” 18.

desperate. By accepting payment and lowering oneself to the status of the mounted, who in proper sexual relationships was not a male citizen (i.e., a woman, slave), a *kinaidos* essentially stripped himself of many of his rights as a citizen. The penalties in Athenian law for being a *kinaidos* were outlined in 346/5 B.C.E. by the prosecutor Aiskhines in the trial against Timarkhos, who was accused of being a *kinaidos* in his youth.⁸⁸ Aiskhines declared, "If any Athenian...is a [*kinaidos*]...let him never deliver an opinion either in the Boule or in the assembly," thus enforcing a significant amount of disfranchisement.⁸⁹ A *kinaidos* lost every political right except his silent vote by hand.⁹⁰ This loss of citizen rights was done to protect and preserve the polis, which suggests an anxiety that if homosexual intercourse was practiced outside the confines of Athenian law, it would corrupt the practitioner. The practitioner, then, unless stripped of his citizen rights to give public and political speeches, would corrupt Athens and incur its fall. Further, the Athenian polis did not believe in the reformation of the *kinaidos*. The polis would not risk its power, prestige and existence on any man proven to flout the legal and social laws regarding homosexuality. Such a man desired to be inferior, and therefore could doom Athens to inferiority in context to other poleis, and to outside enemies.

In ancient Athens, homosexuality was a source of some anxiety. The concepts of proper love, of *eros* and of *philia* were the key components to the acceptance of

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certain kinds of homosexuality. In the ideal conception articulated in Plato's *Symposium*, an adult male citizen found *eros* in a younger male partner because the former desired to impart virtue, wisdom, and guidance within a youth that had the potential to achieve virtue as a free male citizen. This issued a continual supply of citizens who would embody the virtues of the polis, and who would help maintain the dominance and wellbeing of the polis and its people. The reality of homosexual practice was different, however. An anxious Athenian populace sought to control homosexual practices tightly through social taboos and restrictive laws. Pederasty was permitted, but had to be practiced through a refined courtship marked by self-control and dignity. Laws protected youths from the sexual aggression of adult males. Laws also stripped adult males who lost their self-control and sold their bodies to the sexual and psychological dominance of other adult males. Though ancient Athens permitted limited forms of pederasty, restrictions on male prostitution reveal a deep-seated fear that if not checked, homosexuality could corrupt its citizenry and subvert the polis. Similar fears can be seen in contemporary America. Like the Athenians, modern Americans have hedged homosexual relationships with myriad legal and social restrictions. Many opposing the legalization of gay marriage cite its potential for subverting the family unit or even the United States government. As political and social parties look to history for guidance, it is important to understand the truth behind these ancient taboos and legislature, regardless of one's position in the contemporary debate.

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The Wrongfully Judged: A Study of Perceptions and Reality Regarding Indian Prostitution during the California Gold Rush

Michelle Khoury

The Gold Rush is romantically remembered in California history as an era of promise, hope, and opportunity. Miners from all areas of the country and from the world fled to the California mines with high spirits. In reality, however, the Gold Rush marked a time of despair for many of its participants whose dreams of prosperity were dashed. However, another cast of characters felt the misery and desolation of this era even more than the disheartened miners: the state's native inhabitants, and especially its native women. A great deal of research has been conducted regarding the violent exploitation of Indian women by rape and forced concubinage. However, historians have paid far less attention to Indian prostitution, which is a much more complex issue. Unlike rape, prostitution did not necessarily involve a clear-cut victim and offender. In fact, the circumstances varied from case to case. Perhaps the man was a poor and lonely miner, or conversely, he may have been racist and violent. In some cases the native woman was starving and desperate, or perhaps she was immoral and promiscuous.

Although scholars have paid much more attention to other minority prostitutes during this era— such as the Chinese, French, or Mexican— historians Albert Hurtado and Susan Lee Johnson have studied the

neglected Indian prostitute. Such a study is incomplete, however, if only one party's story is told. It is essential to examine both Anglo perceptions of Indian prostitutes as well as the reality of the matter, for these are two disparate, though related, issues. Whites often generalized, assuming all Indian women to be the same, and they allowed their prejudices to influence their perceptions of these women. The racist and ignorant attitudes of Anglos caused them to view Indian prostitution inaccurately, failing to recognize the complete picture of this complex practice.

It is evident that white perceptions of native prostitutes were shaped by racism and prejudice. In studying common attitudes of Anglos towards these women, it is important to examine a multitude of sources. Some important documents include popular magazines, contemporary newspapers, and diaries. These records reveal the racist and ignorant attitudes that Anglos held toward Indian prostitutes. Collectively, this literature reflects common views of native women as barbaric, ugly, filthy, and immoral. Popular magazines provide a fountain of information on Anglo attitudes concerning Indian practices. *Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine* is a great example. In its April 1859 edition, the exceedingly subjective attitudes toward Indians were apparent: "these Indians are simply men and women, and without doubt the lowest in morality and intellectual ability on this continent."¹ This passage explicitly attacked the moral character of Indians.

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Even more than the magazine's text, its illustrations provide insight regarding Anglo perceptions of Indian women. These images portrayed them in scant clothing, wearing revealing dresses or straw skirts with their upper bodies exposed. Their unusual garments, being very different from what was considered acceptable and ladylike in Anglo society, helped shape white perceptions of prostitutes. Because their clothing was far from modest, Anglos took these women to be inherently promiscuous and immoral. Additionally, the women were often shown participating in strenuous physical labor. Illustrations in *Hutchings'* displayed them panning for gold, gathering acorns, grinding seeds, and digging for roots (See Image 1).² The cultural disparities here regarding appropriate work in the domestic sphere help explain why native women were so misunderstood and accused. Whites were ignorant of Indian culture and failed to understand the traditional customs of these people. Thus, when they saw magazine illustrations of native females participating in unladylike work, they ignorantly dismissed them as barbaric and filthy.

It is also very helpful to examine the way contemporary newspapers portrayed these women. Most news reports at the time reinforced this ignorant stereotype of native prostitutes as filthy and uncivilized creatures. For example, in 1858 the Nevada *Journal*, quoting the Shasta *Courier*, reported:

The recent rains have had the effect of increasing the female portion of our "native" population. They may be seen gathered in small

² Hutchings, *Illustrated California Magazine*, April 1859.

groups squatted along our side walks during the day, especially from sundown to a late hour of the night. It is a pity and a shame that these poor degraded beings are, through the negligence of the general government, forced to procure their bread and clothing in a manner the most infamous. . . . They are a disgusting sore upon the face of this community ? a most vile nuisance, calling loudly for abatement.³

This news article is valuable for its vivid descriptions. The image of groups of native women “squatting” on the sides of streets in the evenings is very revealing. The choice of the word “squat” here is significant because it contributed to the idea of these women as unladylike and barbaric. Respectable Anglo women would not have been seen “squatting.” Furthermore, the last sentence, describing the prostitutes as a “sore,” powerfully exemplifies common perceptions of these Indian women. It is also important to note the territorial and possessive tone of this piece. The writer used terms such as “*our* side walks” to indicate that this community belonged to the superior white race and not to these dirty, “vile nuisances.”

Another telling news article comes from the 1855 Sacramento *Union*. This piece, entitled “Drunken Indians,” reported on exactly what the title indicates: “We noticed a troupe of Indians, male and female, on the Levee, yesterday, well lined with whisky, and in possession of an extra bottle or two to keep the lining

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intact.”⁴ Articles such as this one reinforced notions of Indian prostitutes as shameful, immoral, and dependent on alcohol. The strong association of native prostitutes with whisky is one that the contemporary news did not ignore. A final example of a news source which showed no sympathy toward Indian women appeared in the San Francisco *Bulletin*, which quoted the Yreka *Union*. The article objected to “low-grade white men” who purchased Indian prostitutes with liquor.⁵ This brief excerpt indicates the way society viewed not only the prostitutes, but also the miners who hired them. These men were looked down upon and were considered second class. This passage additionally reveals Anglo notions of the prostitutes’ drunkenness, as well as the very cheap prices they required for their services. Once more, the contemporary press was in no way compassionate to the Indian prostitute.

Journals, particularly miners’ diaries, are an additional source of material which reveals Anglo perceptions. These personal accounts are enlightening because they were written without the intention of being read by others, and therefore, some of them provide extremely private experiences. These miners often experienced feelings of loneliness on the secluded frontier, and thus turned to prostitutes to ease the pain. The journals of Alfred Doten, which were edited and compiled by Walter Van Tilburg Clark, portray rich details of frontier life as a gold miner. Originally from

⁴ “Drunken Indians,” *Sacramento Daily Union*, February 27, 1855.

⁵ *San Francisco Bulletin*, June 10, 1858, in Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict between the California Indians and White Civilization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 339.

Plymouth, Massachusetts, Doten journeyed to California in 1849 with exuberance, youthfulness, and an appetite for adventure. He recorded several encounters with Miwok women. Below is an excerpt from his journal, dated September 20, 1852:

This forenoon two squaws came over from the Rancheria and paid me quite a visit – One of them was Pacheco's wife – she had her child done up after their fashion and toted him round her back with a string over her head – As is as usual she was accompanied by an old hag of a squaw – I gave her several presents and made myself pretty thick with her and after a while I got her [erasure] and took her into my tent and [erasure] was about to lay her altogether but the damned old bitch of a squaw came in as mad as a hatter and gave the young gal a devil of a blowing up – Nevertheless I still left my hand in her bosom and kissed her again right before the old woman. She didn't get cross at all but gave me a slap in the face and ran away laughing. . I told the little gal in Spanish to come up alone sometime and as she understood Spanish she said she would if she could ever get a chance.⁶

This passage illuminates Anglo-Indian relations. First and foremost, it suggests that native women were promiscuous. This young woman, who was married and had a child, seemed to be willingly conceding her

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body to Doten with no fear or shame. She even agreed to try to return to him so they could resume their business. In other words, the encounter seemed to be completely consensual and in no way suggested that Doten violated this woman's body. This image of the Miwok prostitute is not one which reflected desperation and destitution, but rather promiscuity and immorality.

Another miner, Timothy Osborn from Edgartown, Massachusetts, also shared his experiences in a dairy. He worked near Miwok people and commented on their sexuality. His observations included discussion of the women's scant clothing, particularly their bare breasts. Osborn's descriptions depicted the Miwok not merely as lacking modesty, but as lustful. He interpreted this tribe's sexual custom of abstaining from copulation during certain seasons and permitting it in others to be animal-like. During the allowed times, he believed the women hunted for men in the most primitive, shameless manner. He wrote, "I have seen Indian girls, who, when they were 'in heat,' would fondle you around and in every possible way would ask you to relieve them."⁷ It is evident that Osborn identified the Miwok women to be overtly sexual during the permitted seasons. His views reflected those of the majority of the white miner population.

In studying native prostitution, it is important to realize that Anglo perceptions, as demonstrated through popular magazines, newspapers, and jour-

⁷ Timothy Osborn in Susan Lee Johnson, "Bulls, Bears, and Dancing Boys: Race, Gender, and Leisure in the California Gold Rush," *Radical History Review* 60 (1994): 18.

nals, failed to grasp the entirety of the situation. In reality, Indian prostitution was much more complex and convoluted than whites understood it to be. One feature of this practice that many Anglos disregarded was the *necessity* of the situation. Many people dismissed these women as dirty and sinful, not recognizing that they were often *forced* into prostituting their bodies. Although many whites did not acknowledge it, what drove these women to this dire practice was desperation. Recent scholarship has shed light onto this subject and has revealed a more complete picture. The Gold Rush signified destruction for Native Americans. Immigrants in search of gold drove them from their homes, captured their land, and diminished their resources. As a result, the native population faced starvation and destitution. Prostitution was a means to ease these harsh circumstances. Physiologist Sherburne Cook, who studied the population of North American aboriginals, explained, "It is clear. . . that the evil flourished primarily because of economic necessity, and not because the natives were any more prone to adopt the custom than other races under similar circumstances."⁸ In addition, historian Albert Hurtado pointed out, "The low prices that [Indian prostitutes] received for their services demonstrated their desperation."⁹ Modern scholarship, then, has corroborated that poor economic conditions and starvation were key forces in the development of this practice.

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Another dimension that one must study in order to comprehend native prostitution is the grave consequences it produced. The complications it created help demonstrate that prostitution was not a lifestyle choice, but rather a required measure for survival. No one would elect to suffer from such conditions. One example is widespread venereal disease, particularly syphilis. According to an 1853 El Dorado County Report, starvation and destitution “[are] driving the squaws to the most open and disgusting acts of prostitution, thereby engendering diseases of the most frightful and fatal character.” The account continued, explaining that some women were “so far advanced with this disease that most of them were unable to walk.”¹⁰ This horrifying report was not the only one which commented on the widespread and lethal nature of syphilis. An Indian agent described a case of a young native girl: “the clitoris being entirely eaten away.”¹¹ The spread of venereal disease was responsible for the loss of a significant number of Indian prostitutes. It not only affected the population of the prostitutes, but also the future generation of natives. Hurtado explained, “Because syphilis had a negative impact on Indian birth rates, its presence in the native population had a special significance. With the population sharply declining, syphilis made it difficult to recover losses through reproduction.” California Indians at this time were dying in great numbers as a

¹⁰ E.A. Stevenson to Thomas J. Henley, December 31, 1853 in *The Destruction of California Indians*, ed. Robert F. Heizer (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 14-15.

¹¹ J. Markle to T.J. Henley, December 17, 1858 in *Indian Survival on the California Frontier*, Albert L. Hurtado (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) 180.

result of contact with whites, whether it was because whites deliberately murdered them, inadvertently killed them with illnesses they brought, or arrogantly conquered their land and food supply. Thus, Hurtado stated that syphilis created an additional strain on the native population by impacting their reproductive ability.¹² Disease, death, misery ? this was the reality of the situation.

An additional piece in this picture is the social price prostitutes had to pay. Although punishment for adultery varied from tribe to tribe, many women suffered harsh penalties. Prostitutes were ostracized; they became outsiders within their own society. Thus, they were not only deplored by Anglos, but also by their own people. Hurtado expanded on this phenomenon:

Indian prostitutes ran risks in their own communities, as an 1851 incident in southern Oregon shows. After a young, one-eyed woman had intercourse with a miner for some food, her husband appeared and threatened her. The next day, another Indian came to the camp and begged the whites to leave the women alone. He added that among his people the penalty for adultery was the loss of an eye.¹³

This is a fascinating example of a social consequence of prostitution. This woman was branded permanently

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as a criminal within her community. She was forever identified this way because of her missing eye. Cook examined other costs adulterous women had to pay, stating "jealousy might incite the husband or the brother to take action against the woman. Even more serious was the reaction when the female was not directly assaulted but yielded to moral or financial pressure." He continued with records of prostitutes who were murdered by angry clan members or husbands for their transgressions. Cook explained that "such actions were infrequent, but they are indicative of the deep animosity which burned in the hearts of many Indians and which could find partial release in retaliation on their own kind."¹⁴ So the social cost of prostitution went beyond mere ostracism, it sometimes entailed murder from tribal kin.

It is important to note that traditional customs varied according to the tribe, an important piece of the picture that Anglos overlooked. Marriage practices, social norms, and punishment for adultery differed according to the specific community. While the penalty for prostitution according to one particular tribe may have been the loss of an eye, for others, such as the Nissenan, Konkow, and Maidu people, the price was death.¹⁵ Conversely, some tribes allowed the practice to go unpunished. Perhaps these people sympathized, understanding the dire circumstances which necessitated it. Or maybe copulation was permitted during certain occasions or seasons, as the Miwok were accused of practicing. What is important to realize, though, is that whites did not usually distinguish

¹⁴ Cook, *Conflict*, 89-90.

¹⁵ Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*, 88.

these unique differences in tribal customs. Rather, they ignorantly generalized all natives to be the same.

The demographic composition of the Gold Rush population is another important factor in this discussion. Men significantly outnumbered women during this time, and California Indians constituted the largest class of women during the early 1850s.¹⁶ This population ratio helps explain how prostitution came to appear among the state's aboriginals. When examining the percentage of Miwok women in the Southern Mines—located near the San Joaquin River—it becomes clearer why so many of them became prostitutes. Johnson analyzed the demographic framework of the Gold Rush:

The Southern Mines were the destination of disproportionate numbers of non-Anglo-American immigrants, and the homeland for native peoples collectively known as Miwoks. So in the south, the absence of Anglo women was matched by the presence of large numbers of Miwoks, Mexicans, Chileans, French, and, later, Chinese. Of these, only the Miwok population included roughly as many women as men.¹⁷

This helps explain why Native American women became the earliest prostitutes. The answer is simple economics: the Indians were able to supply the high demand for women. As Johnson pointed out, this was especially true in the Southern Mines. Cook also commented on the supply and demand issue: "When

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the white race entered, . . . a demand [for female favors] was immediately created. . . . There was an excess of both unmarried males and males of other circumstances, who wished to take advantage of the opportunity offered by numerous native women.” He added, “The very bad economic condition of the native furnished a powerful incentive. . . It is easy to appreciate, therefore, how readily the native race might adopt this new means of improving its material condition.”¹⁸ Prostitution was an expedient way to escape the destitution and starvation from which these people suffered.

Indian prostitutes were wrongfully judged. Discrepancy between images and reality is not unique to this specific group of people. In fact, the problem of mistaken identity is very common throughout history; it existed long before the Gold Rush era and still exists to this day. It is clear that the realities of Native American prostitution went beyond the perceptions of nineteenth-century Anglos. Their descriptions were colored with racism and ignorance and therefore failed to grasp the complete picture of this complicated practice. Whites did not attempt to understand the circumstances surrounding it, or, to a certain extent, the circumstances which generated it. They considered these women promiscuous, immoral, and dirty. It is not that these perceptions were completely untruthful or fabricated; rather, they were inaccurate. They simply did not reflect a complete understanding of the entire situation for they often ignored or failed to recognize key pieces of the picture: the necessity of the situation, the physical and social consequences

¹⁸ Cook, *Conflict*, 82-83.

women suffered, the differences in tribal customs, and the demographic makeup of the time. Although white attitudes—as recorded in magazines, newspapers, and miner diaries—did not encompass all of these factors, they are by no means unimportant in our study of Indian prostitution. Conversely, they provide telling information regarding Anglo-Indian relations. It is by studying the perceptions of whites, in addition to these issues, that one may understand more comprehensively the complex practice of Native American prostitution during the Gold Rush.



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Image 1¹⁹

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¹⁹ *An Indian Women Panning Out Gold*, 1859, Illustrated California Magazine.

“The Picture of Free, Untrammelled Womanhood”: The Bicycle’s Influence on Women’s Freedom and Femininity in the 1890s

Sarah Tkach

“Let me tell you what I think of bicycling,” declared suffragist Susan B. Anthony in an 1896 interview in the *New York World*.

“I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives woman a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. It makes her feel as if she were independent. The moment she takes her seat she knows she can’t get into harm unless she gets off her bicycle, and away she goes, the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.”¹

Since Anthony was in her seventies at the time of the 1890s bicycle craze, she likely did not actually ride the wheel. Even so, in her high-profile interview with Nellie Bly, the famous “girl reporter,” the lifelong suffragist and reformer singled out bicycling for its contributions

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to women’s emancipation.² Anthony was well aware that the fleeting happiness of the bicycle did not make up for the otherwise unequal status of women, phrasing her praise as, for example, giving women the *feeling* of independence, rather than true independence, which would only come with the ballot.³ Nonetheless, she welcomed the bicycle because it helped “to make [women] equal with men in work and pleasure” and gave women a taste of what their lives could be like in a truly equal society.⁴

Scholars have studied many aspects of the “bicycle craze” of the 1890s. Scholars have studied the connection between the bicycle and changes in tourism, recreation, and transportation. Historians studying social history have recorded the effects that bicycling had on women’s fashion by increasing the demand for dress reform, the most controversial of which was bloomers.⁵ Historians of medicine have researched the medical history of biking and how the new sport challenged 19th century notions of health and physi-

² Bly became famous for her 1889 trip around the world in seventy-two days, beating the fictional record of Phileas Fogg, Jules Verne’s hero in *Around the World in Eighty Days*, published in 1872. She had fought gender barriers to gain acceptance as a serious journalist in a male-dominated field. See Peter Zheutlin, *Around the World on Two Wheels* (New York: Citadel Press, 2008), 16.

³ Bly, 10.

⁴ Lynn Sherr, *Failure Is Impossible* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 277.

⁵ See David V. Herlihy, *Bicycle* (New Haven: Yale Press, 2004), 267-71. Libby Smith Miller invented the Turkish trouser, later called the bloomer after Amelia Bloomer, which reemerged forty years later with female riders; See Elisabeth Griffith, *In Her Own Right* (New York: Oxford Press, 1985), 71.

cality. Many physicians saw the bicycle as an antidote to men's physical denigration due to increasingly sedentary urban lifestyles.⁶ However, they hotly debated the appropriateness of women adopting the sport. This paper uses the research of Ellen Gruber Garvey, David Herlihy, Pryor Dodge, Sarah Hallenbeck, Lisa S. Strange and Robert S. Brown, which explore how women embraced and contested the freedom of the bicycle. Numerous primary source materials have illuminated the significant sense of freedom women experienced through riding the bicycle.⁷

Bicycling was a catalyst for people to reexamine gender norms, expectations, and behavior. While historians have studied many of the bicycle's important implications, they have neglected to look more closely at how it affected the women.⁸ This paper examines how in the 1890s, the bicycle was a means through which changing concepts of women's freedom and femininity were realized. It analyzes the bicycle as

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a symbol of a variety of freedoms, including physical, emotional, spatial, social, religious, and political. Next, the paper considers how these changing freedoms impacted notions of femininity by challenging or supporting Victorian womanhood, or doing a combination.

During the 1890s, an estimated ten million bicycles were in use out of a population close to seventy-six million.⁹ Technology started the trend in the 1880s, as manufacturers shifted from high-wheeler, or "ordinary" bicycle, with one enormous wheel in front and a small wheel in back, to the "safety" bicycle, a technologically superior machine with two equal-sized wheels, pneumatic tires, chain drive technology, and a diamond frame. "Safety bikes" allowed men and women alike to ride with equal ease.¹⁰ Indeed, people commented that bicycling was democratic, open to men and women, rich and poor, urban and rural.¹¹ Despite its eventual widespread popularity, the bicycle was not initially accepted. Though impressed with the tricycle on a trip to England in 1880, writer Emma Moffett Tyng believed that for most Americans, "all the proprieties since Martha Washington forbade" adoption of the bicycle.¹² Aware of the medical and moral debates about women riding on bicycle saddles, manufacturers designed tricycles with full seats. Though more socially acceptable and easier to ride in long skirts, the tricycles'

⁹ Aronson, 309.

¹⁰ Zheutlin, *Around the World*, 27-8.

¹¹ Margery A. Bulger, "American Sportswomen in the 19th Century," *Journal of Popular Culture* 16, no. 2 (Fall 1982): 14.

¹² Emma Moffett Tyng, "Exercise for Women: Bicycles and Tricycles," *Harper's Bazaar* 23, no. 32 (9 Aug. 1890): 614, APS Online (accessed 6 Mar. 2011).

“marketing initiatives won limited success” since it was heavier, more wind resistant, and less efficient than a bicycle.¹³

Ten years later, Emma Tyng welcomed the bicycle, as did tens of thousands of other Americans. The price of a new safety bicycle lowered from \$150 to \$100 by the mid-1890s.¹⁴ The price was just low enough to tempt many people, even when “the annual per capita income was about \$1,000.”¹⁵ Biking was particularly popular with women. In 1891, the editor of *The Wheel and Cycling Trade Review* claimed women had flocked to cycling “with all the eagerness of a duck to water.”¹⁶ The bicycle presented women the opportunity for “independence and freedom.”¹⁷

The high wheeler, or “ordinary” bicycle, with one enormous wheel and a small wheel behind it, had specifically masculine connotations. With a few exceptions of already morally suspect female stage performers, only adventurous wealthy young men rode the high wheeler as other people watched and laughed at the fad.¹⁸ With the advent of the safety bike with two equal-sized wheels and a diamond frame, women had the chance to have “an enhanced version of the freedoms that riding a high wheeler had allowed men,” and these freedoms challenged existing gender definitions.¹⁹ So even as the safety bike was much more

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equally accessible to both men and women because of its design, it inherited the masculine connotations of the high wheeler. In response, bicycle manufacturers developed a separate, marked variety to assert that “a woman’s mode of riding was available and that riding need not be masculinizing.”²⁰ Manufacturers designed drop-framed bicycles to accommodate women’s skirts, and gave their models female names such as Josephine or Victoria.²¹

In Victorian American society, wealthier white women did not participate in physically strenuous tasks, as doctors considered them fragile and weak, despite the evidence of working-class women regularly laboring away at exhausting tasks. Scholar Hallenbeck explains that common beliefs at the time asserted that men had much more energy than women. Women had, “limited feminine bodily economy,” meaning that their energies “could not be fully restored once depleted through intellectual or physical exertion.”²² Medical literature portrayed women as trapped by their bodies, and the bicycle released women from their entrapment by their bodies’ frailty and weakness. De Koven described the feeling of riding as one in which “the whole body becomes alive, the circulation is increased, indigestion cured, and nerves forgotten.”²³ Female riders gained a new sense of ownership over their own bodies through “the exhilaration of the sense of power over the wheel.”²⁴ Riding was a question of “confidence...will-power, and nerve-control” requiring

²⁰ Ibid., 69.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Hallenbeck, 331.

²³ de Koven, “Bicycling for Women,” 393.

²⁴ Ibid.

the development of mental poise, character, and self-government.²⁵

Some women drew a direct connection between the mastery of the wheel and confidence that women could carry to all other aspects of her life. The woman rider, de Koven wrote, “will become mistress of herself, as of her wheel, no longer a victim to hysterics, ... a rational, useful being restored to health and sanity.”²⁶ De Koven’s use of “rational” also suggests a departure from the traditional view of women as irrational beings. Frances Willard, president of the influential Women’s Christian Temperance Union, consciously used her position as a public figure to advocate women bicycling. She publicized her glowing account of learning to ride in the 1895 book *A Wheel Within a Wheel*.²⁷ Willard saw the bicycle as giving women the freedom to live their lives more fully. She loved to see “worn-out women” take up bicycling “and find a new lease of health and life thereby.”²⁸ Willard hoped others would find “encouragement by [her] example” to embrace physical activity to relieve their ills.²⁹

Cycling paved the way for changing images of womanhood. Dr. Lucy Hall-Brown saw the positive effects of women learning to ride as women gained physical freedom through changing notions of [through

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acceptance of a more athletic] femininity. When women understood the needs of their muscles and started to use them, the "whole being responded with a joy born of its new freedom."³⁰ Also, cycling "opened the door to...every form of desirable exercise for women."³¹

Anthony recognized these physical freedoms as supporting a larger mission: women's emancipation, beginning with emancipation from Victorian constraints. Further, she believed the bicycle offered new freedoms as it gave "women fresh air and exercise."³² Echoing Anthony, women's rights advocate Stanton also valued the bicycle's role in increasing women's self-reliance. As biographer Elizabeth Griffith writes of Stanton, "women's absolute self-reliance—physical, emotional, financial, political, intellectual and legal independence" was paramount.³³ Even in her early writings she advocated women developing all their faculties and having a fair chance to prove themselves physically, which they did not have since they did not have men's freedom.³⁴ Thus, for women the bicycle was a means on their path to full self-development. Stanton viewed the bicycle as "a great blessing to our girls" as it encouraged "self-reliance" and "mechanical ingenuity" when they had to repair their bicycles.³⁵ A

³⁰ Lucy Hall-Brown, "The Wheel as an Aid to Health," *Harper's Bazaar* 29, no. 11 (14 Mar. 1896): 231, APS Online (accessed 6 Mar. 2011).

³¹ Ibid.

³² Sherr, 277.

³³ Griffith, 203-4.

³⁴ Roberta A. Park, "'All the Freedom of the Boy' Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Nineteenth-Century Architect of Women's Rights," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 18, no. 1 (2001): 14, Routledge Online (accessed 9 Feb. 2011).

³⁵ Elizabeth Cady Stanton quoted in Park, 22-3.

prophetic thinker, Stanton's views on bicycling reflect a deeper philosophy about women's place in society than what others described as merely an enjoyable pastime.

Writer and playwright Marguerite Merington commented on the "heavy burden of work...laid on all the sisterhood," which according to class was "to do good, earn bread, or squander leisure."³⁶ The bicycle provided relief from the expectations of daily life so that women of "many callings and conditions love the wheel."³⁷ Merington saw the bike as the means linking women with a broader world when faced with the narrowness of their sphere, declaring that "the sufferer can do no better than flatten her sphere to a circle, mount it, and take to the road."³⁸ The change of scene and exercise could only immensely benefit women. For Hopkins, the wheel was the "strongest influence... to induce [women] to release themselves from their self-imprisonment" and "a godsend to many," lifting women "from inertia of body and stagnation of mind to a higher life physically, mentally, and morally."³⁹ Hopkins connected physical health with mental and emotional health as well as morality. For upper and middle class women who spent most of their lives indoors supervising domestic servants and cultivating an ornamental existence, the bicycle offered a drastic change towards focus on personal accomplishment. De Koven described the joy and pride of learning to ride: "Suddenly you feel that you have it, and presto! you

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are off! The secret is yours, the victor’s crown upon your brow!”⁴⁰

A constrained woman’s body signified compliance with a strict set of moral codes, which contemporary medical opinion supported.⁴¹ Women who abandoned corsets and floor-length skirts signified that they rejected normative aesthetic and moral conventions. Thus, women cyclists risked social scorn when they stepped out of their domestic realm to ride the wheel. However, women’s clothing could not sustain the rigors of cycling, and it caught on wheels, chains, and pedals so often that women sought alternative clothing for when they went riding.

Anthony supported dress reform inspired by the bicycle. Anthony saw the bicycle as a catalyst for freer, more sensible dress for women.⁴² She wanted women to have the freedom to choose “dress to suit the occasion” like men, who could wear pants and then switch to “gowns and caps when on the Judge’s bench” without criticism.⁴³ Stanton as well valued the dress reform and urged women to ignore public criticism and wear what was practical. For Stanton, what was practical was natural, and a woman wearing traditional floor-length dress to ride was “unnatural—like a ‘churn on casters, a pyramid in shape from waist downwards.’”⁴⁴ Stanton urged women to “decide for

⁴⁰ de Koven, “Bicycling for Women,” 389.

⁴¹ Dodge, 122.

⁴² Bly, 10.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Shall Women Ride the Bicycle?” *The American Wheelman* [May 1896], quoted in Lisa S. Strange and Robert S. Brown, “The Bicycle, Women’s Rights, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton,” *Women’s Studies* 31, no. 5 (Sept./Oct.

themselves what was feminine and attractive.”⁴⁵ Thus, female bicyclists could choose to wear bifurcated skirts, bloomers, or shorter skirts because they could and should have autonomy over their personal comportment. The bicycle enabled a new femininity based on personal choice having more influence than societal pressure.

Emotional freedom was closely tied to physical freedom brought by the bicycle. Writer and bicycle enthusiast Hopkins repeated other writers in her praises of the bicycle’s liberating effects for women. She argued that the bicycle “took [women] completely out of themselves, giving rest and a complete change never before experienced.”⁴⁶ Women returned from a ride with “new-found hope,” “joy,” “strength and courage” to vanquish any “petty annoyances and worriments.”⁴⁷ The bicycle was the impetus for increased freedom from worry.

As women progressed in learning to ride week to week, wrote Emma Moffett Tyng in *Harper’s Bazaar*, they gained an “increase of strength, endurance, and steadiness,” along with “the exhilaration, the sense of action and aliveness” from their individual efforts.⁴⁸ These attributes brought more satisfaction than the fleeting gratification of a purchase. Only “courage,” “nerve,” “confidence, perseverance, and patient practice” could help women reach their goal, not depend-

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ence on men or docility, as societal prescriptions dictated.⁴⁹ Tyng argued that women developed “decision and firmness of character” in the learning to ride.⁵⁰ Prevailing notions of femininity did not advocate for these characteristics associated with physical, mental, and emotional strength. Bicycling placed women squarely in the center of their own lives and experiences, allowing them self-governance over their bodies.

In addition to physical and emotional freedom, the bicycle offered increased mobility for its female riders. One observer wrote that a bicyclist’s “power of movement” increased “from three to fourfold” that of a pedestrian, providing the rider with “the enlarged power of seeing persons and places.”⁵¹ Bicycles allowed women to visit neighboring towns and the countryside, quite an increase in spatial freedom for city dwellers who “except for an occasional railroad trip, rarely left their place of residence.”⁵² While working-class women, including immigrants and ethnic minorities, could not usually afford bicycles, the “metal steed” extended travel to middle class, white American women and men.⁵³ In contrast, earlier in the 19th century, only elites had the means to have horses and carriages that offered the amount of movement now available with the more affordable bicycle.⁵⁴ Middle class women

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Martyn, 939.

⁵² Aronson, 311.

⁵³ The bicycle was commonly compared to the horse and described with equine terms. See Smith, 11-2. “Metal steed” was used by de Koven, “Bicycling for Women,” 392.

⁵⁴ Aronson, 311.

particularly embraced the bicycle's freedom of mobility because they lacked it in their lives as homemakers.

Women made up at least one third of the bicycling market in the US.⁵⁵ That such a large portion of riders would rather risk social criticism by cycling than acquiesce back to their indoor domain indicates women's desire for change. Writer Martyn claimed that "the wheel has brought a new freedom, an emancipation from the monotony of household routine and from conventions of dress," explaining why women enjoy cycling "even more than the men."⁵⁶ Martyn continued the freedom metaphor, saying that biking gave women specifically "a novel and unexpected enfranchisement" and a "great emancipation."⁵⁷

Also, the bicycle could help decrease isolation, as it brought "city and country into closer union."⁵⁸ Bicycling increased one's social circle to include "all other families within a radius of ten or even twenty miles."⁵⁹ Social connectedness was particularly valuable for women since their primary tasks, childrearing and housekeeping, took place in isolation from other women. While the bicycle played a key role fostering women's spatial freedom, it also contributed to increased social freedom. The freedom to enter new spaces contributed to increased social freedom.

The bicycle "fundamentally transformed social relations" especially those between men and women.⁶⁰ With greater mobility and freer fashion, women could

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meet men as social equals in ways in which they had not before. Bicycles changed courtship, too, opening the door for more privacy for a couple. In 1896, historian Joseph B. Bishop described how the bicycle altered notions of propriety in socializing. Parents who usually required a chaperone for their daughters when they accompanied young men to the theater had embraced the bicycle and "allow[ed] [their daughters] to go bicycle-riding alone with young men," considering this outing "perfectly proper."⁶¹

Some saw the bicycle as creating more equal relationships between men and women, especially in marriage. Writer de Koven believed that bicycling was a worthwhile basis for relationships, and crucial for "developing the independent intercourse of men and women."⁶² Harry Dacre's popular 1892 song "Daisy Bell," also known as "Bicycle Built for Two," included the line "we will go in tandem as man and wife."⁶³ Speaking to the beloved Daisy, the man sang, "You'll take the lead in each trip we take,/ Then if I don't do well,/ I'll permit you to use the brake."⁶⁴ These lyrics suggest a marriage ideal of companionate partnership, where the husband still retained most of the power, but viewed his wife as a capable being, in place of rigid subordination where the husband did not expect to consult his wife or share any interests with her. Though the message was mixed, supporters eagerly

⁶¹ Bishop, 683.

⁶² de Koven, "Bicycling for Women," 394.

⁶³ Harry Dacre, "Daisy Bell (A Bicycle Built for Two)," 1892, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences: Kids' Pages Sing-Along Songs, <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/daisy.htm> (accessed 20 Feb. 2011).

⁶⁴ Ibid.

anticipated the bicycle's positive effects on gender relations.

In addition to offering women more freedom in courtship and marriage, the bicycle also increased the acceptance of mixed gender socializing. Bishop declared, "there is no leveller [sic] like the wheel" and riders "treat the bicycle as the badge of equality among all its possessors."⁶⁵ Further, as many commentators at the time noted, the bicycle "br[ought] all classes together" so that each rider felt "fully the equal of every other" since "a wheel of some kind [wa]s within every one's reach."⁶⁶ Some bicycling clubs, such as the Harlem Wheelmen of New York, even admitted women members.⁶⁷ As white women enjoyed more white-collar employment opportunities like being a social worker or department store clerk, they could use their wages to buy a bicycle. Bicycling was "open to the members of both sexes equally," could be enjoyed as a family pastime, and gave men and women a socially-sanctioned activity to do together.⁶⁸ Men wanted their female relatives to keep them company on rides, so they supported women learning to ride.⁶⁹ Shared activities supported companionate male-female relationships, though it could also reinforce women's traditional role helping and accompanying someone out of duty.

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In addition to freedom to socialize with suitors and husbands, women also gained the freedom to have social bicycle clubs. While countless women's clubs had formed in the later part of the 19th century, few addressed the need for women's advancement in physical activity.⁷⁰ In the spring of 1888, Mrs. Harriette H. Mills of Washington D.C. established the first women's cycling club, and women in other cities soon followed suit.⁷¹ The leaders of these clubs could be strong role models for women riders. For instance, Emma Rummell, captain of the Women's Wheel and Athletic Club of Buffalo, had “during the past season covered some 2,500 miles, and quite a number of the members have done 2,000.”⁷² Some women even defied social pressure against female athletic competition by competing in bicycle races.⁷³

The bicycle drew people away from Sunday church services, which elicited criticism from the pious, and disagreement among women. Since the responsibility of moral guardianship lay with women, skipping church would have been rather daring. Certainly some women, probably including temperance activist Willard, wanted to maintain Sabbath traditions. For women who supported traditional Christianity, the bicycle was a tool for evangelizing. Women enthusiastically joined the Salvation Army's bicycle corps to spread the Gospel.⁷⁴ The freedoms offered by the bicycle allowed missionaries to devote more time and

⁷⁰ Welch, 37.

⁷¹ Herlihy, 244.

⁷² “Bicycling,” *Outing*, 46.

⁷³ Herlihy, 205.

⁷⁴ Taylor, 352-9.

energy to evangelizing.⁷⁵ The Salvation Army's use of the bicycle demonstrates how though many religious people had initially considered the bicycle immoral and sinful, others saw in it the freedom to expand their public roles and speak freely about their religion.

Those who disliked traditional Christianity, like Stanton, saw the bicycle as allowing people more freedom in how they wanted to worship and experience the divine. As a transcendentalist, Stanton opposed the dogmatism and structure of the established church, believing that true spiritual fulfillment "lay not in coming to church or studying the Bible, but in communing with nature."⁷⁶ Cycling outdoors gave women the chance to revel in nature's beauty, which was "the true expression of divinity."⁷⁷ Since the bicycle took women out in the "open" and "balmy" air, it offered them a chance to experience spirituality in a very personal way.⁷⁸ Stanton thought that the bicycle supported a freer religion based on egalitarian spiritual principles of "self-reliance" and "commonsense."⁷⁹ In addition to bringing women to a place where they could experience God, cycling also offered women the freedom from preachers who labeled them sinners and a Church that emphasized self-denial, restraint, and women's subordination.⁸⁰ Bicycles facilitated both a rejection of what some women felt was oppressive

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religion, as well as an invitation to explore a deeper spiritual connection with the natural world.

Historian Dodge argues that the bicycle “served as the vehicle for specific political movements organized by and around the issue of women’s rights.”⁸¹ The 1890s saw renewed interest in women’s rights as Americans confronted the challenges of increasing urbanization and industrialization. Women wanted to influence the rapidly changing social and political scene. Most notably, the bicycle represented the political movement for rational dress, but this was not the bicycle’s only political connection. Temperance reformer Willard saw the bicycle as “the greatest agent of the temperance reform” since riding required sobriety.⁸² Suffragists sometimes viewed the surge in cycling’s popularity as helping their cause.

Bicycling became political as cyclists organized to promote their rights and interests, particularly for better roads. For some women, bicycling became a natural bridge to gaining women’s rights. Anthony and Stanton saw a direct connection between the bicycle and woman suffrage. Anthony considered participation in the bicycling community as a natural bridge to gaining women’s rights, as “the bicycle preache[d] the necessity for woman suffrage.”⁸³ When bicyclists demanded special laws creating bike roads, Anthony wrote in a letter to the editor, women could “see that their petitions would be more respected by the law-makers if they had votes.”⁸⁴ Male members of bicycling

⁸¹ Dodge, 133.

⁸² “Miss Willard Hopeful,” 14.

⁸³ Sherr, 277.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

associations like the League of American Wheelmen could see “that they [we]re losing a sources of strength because so many riders of the machine are women.”⁸⁵ Thus, the initially non-political bicycle spurred participation in lobbying and consciousness-raising for women about how the vote would benefit them.

The bicycle's numerous freedoms also illicit warnings of accompanying physical and social risks. For instance, when Bishop wrote that “many girls prefer a ride in a bicycle costume in the evening to sitting at home in more elaborate apparel,” he described women taking advantage of new freedom of dress, freedom to explore the world beyond the home, and freedom to socialize unchaperoned with others.⁸⁶ On the other hand, one satirical poem from 1896 described a series of young women each with a special pocket in their bloomers for “a flask,” a pistol, a poetry collection, “women suffrage speeches,” or stock quotations, respectively.⁸⁷ This poem hints of the bloomers' connection to activities forbidden to women: drinking alcohol, firearms, reading, politics, and business.⁸⁸ Partaking in cycling, particularly while wearing bloomers, associated women with masculine activities.

While many supporters of women cycling argued that cycling could be integrated with existing gender roles, and even strengthen femininity by creating more robust mothers, Stanton approached bicycling from a very different angle. As scholars Strange and Brown point out, Stanton rejected the traditional feminine

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sphere and "in effect conceded that cycling might radically alter the role of women in Victorian society and celebrated that very prospect."⁸⁹ Bicycling would spur the development of androgynous "cardinal virtues" and "inspire women with more courage, self-respect and self-reliance and make the next generation more vigorous of mind and body."⁹⁰ Stanton transformed the bicycle from a simple leisure activity to a symbol of emancipation.

In a similar tone, the collection of editorials about women bicycling that appeared in an 1895 issue of *The Literary Digest* contained a few voices in agreement that the bicycle was bringing rapid change to gender norms. Wheeling was "undoubtedly revolutionizing habits to which women have been tied," acknowledged one writer, and "it [ran] counter to immemorial prejudices as to the sphere with which feminine activities should be confined."⁹¹ The writer then praised the changes in womanhood brought about by the bicycle, saying that it gave women "self-reliance" and helped them overcome "the timidity which used to be considered so appropriate to them as beings who needed the shelter of seclusion and the protection of manly courage."⁹² The writer recognized and welcomed changes in womanhood brought about by the bicycle. As societal

⁸⁹ Strange and Brown, 622.

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Era of the Bicycle," *The American Wheelman* (30 May 1895): 41, quoted in Lisa S. Strange and Robert S. Brown, "The Bicycle, Women's Rights, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton," *Women's Studies* 31, no. 5 (Sept./Oct. 2002): 619, Academic Search Premier EBSCOhost (accessed 20 Feb. 2011).

⁹¹ "The Revolutionary Bicycle," *The Literary Digest*, 5 [335].

⁹² Ibid.

norms shifted, ideal femininity shifted, too, so that the ideal woman sought to cultivate new traits like athleticism and abandon older ones like passivity.

Numerous authors urged women to consult doctors before learning to ride. In order to retain their femininity, women were only supposed to ride at a moderate pace. The bent-over-the-handlebars racing position was criticized in men, but for women “bicycle-riding posture could be a significant measure of propriety and sexual innocence.”⁹³ Immoderation, leaning over the handlebars, and “scorching” (racing) marked a woman rider as crossing the boundaries of feminine behavior into what was masculine.

Non-medically trained women who wrote about the bicycle’s physical benefits challenged the prerogative of the medical establishment over women’s bodies. By asserting that through the embodied experience of riding, a woman gained the knowledge to make her own decisions about her body, bicycling advocates challenged the perceived need for outside “experts” to monitor women’s bodies.⁹⁴ Advocates urged women to embrace bodily freedom and autonomy and to trust their own experiences with the therapeutic and preventative health benefits of the bicycle. The praise that women lavished on the bicycle created convincing support for bicycling, as well as a strong counterargument to the prevailing notions of women’s frailty. Women were not destined to a life of nerves and hysterics due to their gender; rather these were symptoms of physically restricting norms and seden-

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tary lifestyles.⁹⁵ Scholar Hallenbeck concludes that articles supportive of bicycling suggested "the renewability of women's health through exercise."⁹⁶

The bicycle figured prominently in Edna C. Jackson's 1896 short story "A Fin de Cycle Incident," which illustrates how one young woman negotiates the tension between physical freedom and her fiancé's notions of appropriate femininity. Protagonist Renie's conservative fiancé believes no "womanly woman" has use for sports, and explains that he chose Renie over the *fin de siècle* girl and her "mannish posing as an athlete" because he prefers traditional, docile femininity.⁹⁷ However, Renie secretly adores athletics and has started to learn to ride. Torn between her seemingly irreconcilable love for cycling and her love for her fiancé, Renie feels increasingly constrained by the Victorian "pedestal" of womanhood, and turns to exercise for mental and emotional relief.⁹⁸ The story's climax occurs when Renie races on a bicycle to save her fiancé from some hobo's plans to capture and kill him. Her fiancé changes his mind about women riding in bloomers being an "unwomanly exhibition" when Renie claims that she "never could have made it [in time to save his life] with a skirt on!"⁹⁹ The fiancé character thus shows how the bicycle changed social

⁹⁵ See for instance Bisland, 386. See also Willard and Stanton.

⁹⁶ Hallenbeck, 339.

⁹⁷ Edna C. Jackson, "A Fin de Cycle Incident," *Outing* (June 1896): 192-8, in *The American 1890s*, ed. Susan Harris Smith and Melanie Dawson (Durham, NC: Duke Press, 2000), 293, 292.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 293-4.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 298, 302.

perceptions of femininity to include more physical activity and a more companionate marriage, as the couple “spend most delightful hours together, perambulating the country, per cycle.”¹⁰⁰ Cycling, initially a hurdle to marital happiness, becomes instead a heroic element, and a personal interest that Renie retains and even shares with her husband in her marriage.

However, many people still saw the bicycle as challenging femininity in undesirable ways. Even Martyn, who praised the bicycle for men and women, noted that “it will be interesting to watch [the wheel’s] effects upon social life, which cannot all be good.”¹⁰¹ While contemporary historian Bishop wrote that parents saw no objection to letting their daughters bicycle unchaperoned with young men, modern scholar Garvey points out that “when unmarried men and women rode together, cycling threatened chastity and order.”¹⁰² Another writer warned parents to exercise caution when allowing their daughters to go riding with men: “young people...stand before a new danger...the temptations are peculiar and come insidiously even when there was at first not a shadow of evil in the mind...a [rest stop] necessitates an abandon that is not always seemly.”¹⁰³ The warning suggests that co-ed outings were probably quite popular, possibly for those very reasons.

A 1896 statement issued by the Women’s Rescue League demonstrated extreme opposition to the bicycle as liberating, seeing it instead as a threat to women

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and society. League president Charlotte M. Smith alleged that “bicycling by young women ha[d] helped more than any other media to swell the ranks of reckless girls, who finally drift into the standing army of outcast women in the United States.”¹⁰⁴ The sexual arousal supposedly resulting from contact with the bicycle saddle, the change in fashions, and the move to co-ed socializing made the bicycle guilty of fostering prostitution in the eyes of the “highly respectable females” composing League membership.¹⁰⁵ Further, the League claimed that the bicycle was “the devil’s advance agent, morally and physically.”¹⁰⁶ The League’s sharp resistance to the bicycle’s effects on independence seemed to represent a minority view. The periodical *Public Opinion* published responses to the League’s claims, and most asserted that the bicycle had “of course a bad effect in individual instances, but ha[d] be[come] a moral and physical blessing to so many riders.”¹⁰⁷

The bicycle challenged the notion that femininity meant weakness. As discussed previously, the gusto with which women took to the bicycle and their success at riding proved that they could indeed master the physically challenging sport. De Koven wrote that the bicycle was particularly suitable to women.¹⁰⁸ Her idea of femininity was one in which women could conquer their problems with “vapors and nerves,” in other

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 143.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ de Koven, “Bicycling for Women,” 393.

words, a strong femininity, which was a departure from Victorian ideals.¹⁰⁹

WCTU President Willard considered learning to ride a bicycle consistent with traditional femininity.¹¹⁰ A *New York Times* interview described Willard as “delightfully womanly.”¹¹¹ Willard showed that cycling complemented traditional femininity and its emphasis on bettering society through means such as temperance work. Also in 1895, the American Bible House published George F. Hall’s novel *A Study in Bloomers, or The Model New Woman*, which concerned a young female passionate about cycling and temperance.¹¹² She embraced both the freedom of the cyclist and the virtuous role of the Victorian woman.

Merington also saw the bicycle as supporting existing concepts of femininity. In a special bicycling issue of *Scribner’s Magazine*, she claims that cycling “adds joy and vigor to the dowry of the race,” suggesting that riding helped women be better mothers.¹¹³ Advertisers also “asserted a direct link between motherhood and riding.”¹¹⁴ For instance, an 1896 ad for a Columbia bike shows a mother pushing her toddler along on her women’s bike while the child playfully stretches to reach the pedals.¹¹⁵ In this ad, the bicycle is an aid to childrearing. Pointedly, the woman herself is no longer riding, trapped as she is back in maternity. Nonetheless, this maternity suggests a more

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physically active role of the mother in fostering exercise and good health in her children.

Some people also used bicycling to renew the importance placed on women's reproductive capacities. In the context of increased immigration and sedentary urban lifestyles, white, native-born, middle and upper class Americans feared for the future of the “American race.” Women who did not have many children were forsaking their feminine duties. Bicycling could encourage women to be physically healthy, and therefore more resilient to the strains of childbirth and childrearing. In an 1896 issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, Dr. Lucy Hall-Brown specifically praised the bicycle's role in increasing strength and vigor in women, results “which will tell upon the mothers of the race, and make the coming generation longer-lived, clearer-brained, and abler-bodied.”¹¹⁶ The connections to motherhood demonstrate how at the same time that the bicycle symbolized increasing freedoms, it also could reinforce traditional notions of femininity that stressed women as child bearers. By invoking race, Hall-Brown connected personal health to a social obligation to reproduce. According to the evolutionary science of the day, stronger mothers would give birth to stronger children. Sound motherhood, then made the basis of a stable society.

Periodicals and the burgeoning popular press played a key role in supporting women's access to and use of bicycles. Most early advertisements consisted of much explanatory text, but bicycle advertisements were different in their use of extensive visual space.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Hall-Brown, 231.

¹¹⁷ Garvey, 69

The use of graphics benefitted female riders because it endowed bicycles with a sense of modernity and glamour and showed that riding could be decorous. Advertisements and catalogs with naturalistic drawings, some of which featured unrealistically long skirts for riding, provided “constant visual reassurance that women could ride the bicycle with grace and even modesty.”¹¹⁸ Scholar Garvey argues that these portrayals of cycling as an appropriate feminine activity decreased fears about the wheel threatening femininity. Though femininity was changing, it was doing so in a moderated environment.

Some supporters expressed mixed, even contradictory, attitudes towards women and bicycling. In an 1896 *Godey's Magazine* piece, freelance reporter Mary Bisland articulated her belief that the bike had created “a revolution in the thoughts and actions of our worthy female citizen” and was the “actual medium through which the ‘new’ woman has evolved herself.”¹¹⁹ Bisland saw the bicycle as an irreproachable path to female advancement, unlike suffrage and higher education, which “naturally assailed the feminine mind” with doubts about their “efficacy and purity.”¹²⁰ Bisland viewed the female rider as “an absolutely free agent and yet a woman still,” language that sets autonomy and womanliness at odds.¹²¹ As “a woman still,” the female rider was entitled to retain distinctly gendered behavior expectations for courtesy, admiration, chivalry, and other “feminine prerogatives.”¹²² With regards

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to dress reform, Bisland also communicated views that simultaneously supported and undermined new concepts of femininity. She happily predicts her belief in the athletic "ideal female of the future" with comments dissuading women from wearing bloomers, which would realistically better enable athleticism and cycling than long dresses.¹²³ Bloomers, she insisted, were "too great a sacrifice for our sex ever to make" and only in skirts could women "maintain at once in the eyes of men their womanliness and their independence."¹²⁴ Another writer echoed Bisland's sentiments by declaring in 1895 that a bloomer-wearing cyclist retained her womanliness and "deserve[d] the same respect which is awarded the rest of her sex."¹²⁵

Bisland's support of women's advancement in the vein of "different but equal" seems the best way to understand her divergent views supporting special treatment for women, and yet claiming that on the bicycle, the woman rider was "on absolute equality with any man."¹²⁶ Bisland's views show that the bicycle's myriad effects muddle clear distinctions between supporters and opponents of increased freedom for women. The interpretation of these freedoms depended greatly on the person's views of what was appropriately feminine, and whether the prevailing views of femininity supported women's best interests.

Hopkins only embraced change under the guise of tradition. Hopkins rejected the "New Woman" term often associated with the bicycle and instead saw the

¹²³ Ibid, 387.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 388.

¹²⁵ "The Revolutionary Bicycle," *The Literary Digest* 4 [334].

¹²⁶ Bisland, 386.

changes in femininity as merely an improvement on existing womanhood leading to a “renewed woman.” The “New Woman” was “so strident and ungentle” and affected “mannish manners and masculine attire,” while the athletic “renewed woman” was both “womanly and admirable.”¹²⁷ Hopkins argued that athleticism and time spent riding outdoors benefited women by enhancing their capacity to help others. This renewed woman “possesses strength and sense to carry out her own ambitions, but... never neglects to lend a helping hand to weaker, wearier souls than hers.”¹²⁸ The “renewed woman” was one of action for others, which contrasted prior expectations of passivity but continued women’s helping and uplifting role.

The frequency with which writers discussing bicycles invoked liberation metaphors demonstrates the wheel’s importance to changing concepts of freedom. More than a steel contraption, the bicycle symbolized shifting definitions of femininity and independence for women. The bicycle offered the chance for socially acceptable physical exercise, mental and emotional relief, new places and people to see, alternative ways to experience religion, and an entry into politics. Spatial, social, religious, and political freedoms challenged traditional femininity. In contrast, both supporters and critics reframed the physical and emotional freedoms accessible by the bicycle as supporting a more robust womanhood conducive to childrearing and homemaking. Writers in the popular press helped to mitigate the threatening aspects of female cyclists. By the 1900s, the bicycling craze had

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ended, but the freedoms of the bicycle made a lasting impact on women.¹²⁹ As “Merrie Wheeler” Hopkins stated, for many women, the bicycle was “a new and wonderful element... of freedom and joy in living” and a great bearer of “mental and physical emancipation.”¹³⁰

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¹²⁹ For more about the causes and results of the bicycle's sudden fall from popularity and profit see Herlihy, *Bicycle*, 283-305.

¹³⁰ Hopkins, “How the Bicycle Won its Way Among Women,” 244.

Suffragists, Antis, and the New Woman: Press Coverage in California and New York, 1900-1920

Jacqueline N. Stotlar

In grade schools across the country, women's suffrage is a cornerstone of American Social Studies. What most children are taught is that in 1919, Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, legally giving women in every state the right to vote.¹ Along with this history lesson, students are most certainly introduced to the suffragists. They are taught that the likes of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Jeanette Rankin were among the vocal female suffragists who helped clear the path for universal suffrage. Lesson plans even represent the anti-suffragists. The National Archives features a lesson plan on its website that showcases a multitude of documents on women's suffrage, including a 1917 Petition to Congress submitted by the Anti-Suffrage Party of New York.² What is less well represented in American classrooms are the details of the hard fought, state-by-state battles for women's suffrage that began in the mid-1800s and extended into the twentieth century. Beginning with the Western states,

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suffragists and antis across the country became mired in political campaigns and struggled to redefine the political role of women in the process.

As a grade school subject, the New Woman, a rising identity of young women during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, tends to be relegated to high school classrooms, if discussed at all. While failing to teach about the importance of the New Woman is disappointing in and of itself, it is especially problematic when attempting to explore the state-by-state suffrage movements, particularly when studying New York and California. What is missing from the current historical narrative, among American historians as well as grade school teachers, is an exploration of the link between the New Woman, the state-by-state suffrage movements, and the role of the press. Indeed, between 1900 and 1920, the coverage devoted to the New Woman in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* tends to be remarkably similar to the press coverage of the suffrage movements in the same papers. A comparative analysis of over 200 *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* articles and advertisements reveals a clear divide between New York and California attitudes toward the New Woman. In general, the *Los Angeles Times* (LAT) featured encouraging articles with a positive outlook towards the New Woman, while the *New York Times* (NYT) published a far greater number of disparaging and negative articles. Furthermore, the rhetoric used to discuss the New Woman mirrors each paper's language used to discuss the state's suffrage movements, that is, the LAT was highly encouraging of state suffragists, while the NYT was high discouraging. This in turn reflects the larger accepting or obstinate state environments of the suffrage and anti-suffrage

movements in New York and California. Overall, this rhetorical trend indicates that press coverage of the New Woman in the *LAT* and *NYT* played a role in reflecting and influencing the reception of the state suffrage movements in California and New York.

Many scholars have devoted their work toward exploring one or two aspects of this topic. Jane Jerome Camhi, Anne M. Benjamin, Susan Goodier and Sven Beckert have all written detailed scholarship on the state-by-state and national anti-suffrage movements. Rebecca J. Mead, Anne Firor Scott, Andrew MacKay Scott, Sara Graham and Gayle Gullett have conversely written on the state-by-state and national suffrage movements. Other scholars have written extensively on the New Woman. During the second wave of feminism in the 1960s, gender and social historians sought to reclaim the history of the New Woman and bring her political importance to light. Scholars such as Susan M. Cruea and Gail Collins document the changing notions of womanhood that led to the advent of the New Woman and the eventual shift into feminism. Lynn Dumenil tries to measure the political impact of the New Woman in both her political heyday of the 1910s and '20s and throughout the twentieth century. Others have explored the fact that the New Woman was not a phenomenon exclusive to the United States. The anthology *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* features articles on the New Woman and her incarnations in such diverse locations as France, Japan, India, and South Africa. There is also available scholarship on the history of the *LAT* and *NYT*. Robert Liecester Wagner and Susan E. Tifft have written

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excellent histories of both the owners and the development of the world famous papers.

Yet despite the range of topics explored by scholars of the suffrage and anti-suffrage movements, the New Woman, and the *NYT* and *LAT*, none of them explore the link between the press support for the New Woman and the successful or difficult environment created for the suffragists in their state campaigns. This essay will aim to correct this oversight and explore the relationship, beginning with a discussion of the New Woman, the suffrage movement and the representation of both in the *LAT*. From there, it will explore the New Woman, her reception in the *NYT* and the link to the state's anti-suffrage movement. Finally, it will explore the circumstances under which each state gained the right to vote and observe the imbricated relationship between each paper's press coverage and the state attitudes toward these groups of women.

The American version of the New Woman developed as a social identity in the rapidly changing time of the late nineteenth century, which was connected to larger changes in material circumstance. In particular, the late nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth century saw a rise in opportunities for female education and employment for working, middle, and upper class women. The rise of industrialization increased the availability of jobs for working and middle class women outside of the traditional sphere of domesticity, including jobs as factory workers, shopkeepers, department store workers, secretaries, even doctors,

laypeople and lawyers.³ By 1900, women made up ten percent of the non-agricultural work force, an increase of nearly four percent since 1870.⁴ Furthermore, the opportunities for women's education were increasing. According to Catherine Lavender, "from 1890 to 1920, women comprised 55% all high school students and 60% of all high school graduates," and "by 1900, all but three state universities admitted women on same terms as men."⁵ The increase in availability of education meant more women, particularly middle and upper class women, had the opportunity to pursue advanced degrees and become specialty professionals such as lawyers and doctors. The increase in availability of new jobs and education, combined with the rise of women's participation in political campaigns during the mid nineteenth century, as seen in the abolitionist movement and state-by-state temperance campaigns, led to the creation of the identity of "New Woman."

New Women of the late nineteenth century in the U.S. heeded the then radical ideology that "womanhood ought to exist outside the home."⁶ This ideology

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lent itself well to the cause of female suffrage. While female suffrage campaigners had existed in the U.S. since the middle of the nineteenth century, their popularity and tactics dramatically changed near the end of the century. During this time, suffragists began campaigning for women's rights in terms of citizenship. This was an important shift in strategy for suffragists because, as Judith Shklar describes, "there is no notion more central in politics than citizenship."⁷ Shklar notes that American citizenship rests primarily on the point that citizenship is "the equality of political rights," such as the right to vote, the right to pay taxes, and the right to run for public office.⁸ In order to argue for citizenship, the suffragists desired to prove that women were just as capable and just as worthy of upholding the role of citizen as men.

As such, the link between the New Woman and the suffragist played an immensely important role in the passage and acceptance of state-by-state universal suffrage. This was especially true of the fight for universal suffrage in California. After a ballot referendum for universal suffrage failed in the 1896 election, California suffragists cultivated the identity of women as citizens by reaching out to local clubwomen and pushing the identity through propaganda.⁹ Women's Clubs, which saw a dramatic increase in popularity and number at the turn of the twentieth century, embodied the New Woman's redefinition of the tradi-

⁷ Judith Shklar, *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion* (Boston: Harvard UP, 1991), 1.

⁸ Ibid, 2-28.

⁹ Gayle Gullett, "Constructing the Woman Citizen and Struggling for the Vote in California, 1896-1911," *Pacific Historical Review* 69 no. 4 (2000): 573-593.

tional spheres of influence.¹⁰ Victorian attitudes prescribed that women were more moral, sensitive creatures than men, and as such were only fit to life in the domestic sphere, while men were suited to tackle life in the public sphere.¹¹ Yet the New Women argued that their natural moral superiority over men not only suited them to public life as activists, but also demanded that they participate in social reform. To achieve cohesive action within the public sphere, New Women coalesced to form Women's Clubs.

Suffragists saw women's clubs as a valuable platform for their agenda. With the suffragists help, the activist clubwomen were directed towards the good government movement, "an urban forerunner of Progressivism that promised to end corruption in city government."¹² But this agenda may not have been highly publicized had it not been for the *LAT*. The *LAT* had a profound influence on shaping the popularity of the New Woman, and as a corollary, the identity of women as citizens. In general, the *LAT* showed its support by publishing a great number of articles positively detailing the beneficial aspects of the New Woman. Articles covered a wide range of topics, such as Women's Clubs, women in the workforce, and women as community leaders. In addition, the newspaper published a variety of other forms of material, ranging from letters to the editor to prose narratives, but by far the most common articles printed about the New Woman detailed the activities of Women's Clubs.

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In 1903, the *LAT* reported that the Ebell Club hosted Dr. Yamai Kin, a female Chinese physician, to give four lectures on “Things Oriental.” The reporter praises Kin, noting that she is not only an expert in the medical field, but is also “well grounded in the principles of art, ... is endowed with fine literary instinct,” and “is enough of a politician to take a leading part in the councils of the Chinese reform party.”¹³ The reporter goes on to assert “Dr. Kin is undoubtedly a ‘new woman.’”¹⁴ This article summarizes the link between the New Woman, the press, and Clubwomen’s role in supporting the identity of women as citizens. The reporter makes full mention of Kin’s intellect, professional life, and her civic role, all in a positive way. By linking Kin to the identity of the New Woman, the *LAT* supports the notion of women citizens in the process, thus supporting the suffragists’ platform.

Beyond reports from the Women’s Clubs, the *LAT* published a range of articles and advertisements supporting the New Woman. Some of the articles applaud New Women for their participation in highly non-traditional jobs, such as the article “Arizona Sportswoman Shoes Horses,” describes the work of Mollie Thompson White as “a ‘lady blacksmith,’ believed to be the only ‘new woman’ who has this far encroached upon an occupation considered solely and surely masculine.”¹⁵ Ads tended to target the New Woman with products aimed to aid her lifestyle. Products such as Peruna and Lydia E. Pinkham’s

¹³ “Women’s Clubs: The Ebell,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Jan. 1903, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “Arizona Sportswoman Shoes Horses,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 Nov. 1904, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

Vegetable Compound, both serums that supposedly cured a variety of ailments, featured New Women in their advertisements. The ads for both Peruna and Pinkham's Vegetable Compound regularly use "testimonials" from women who were worn out from their busy lives as employees, wives, mothers, and clubwomen. Women should take Peruna or Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to regain their vitality and get back to doing their great community work.¹⁶ Overall, these articles and advertisements created a generally positive outlook toward the New Woman, and by proxy, clubwomen and suffragists in California. This in turn made the push against the anti-suffrage movement easier, as more Californians were willing to accept the notion that women could be capable citizens.

While the New Women, and by proxy, clubwomen and suffragists in California, enjoyed relatively positive press coverage in the *LAT*, which in turn made the push against the anti-suffrage movement easier, the New Women in New York experienced much more entrenched resistance to suffrage rights. Unlike the anti-suffrage movement in California, which failed to garner much support in the popular press, the anti-suffragists of New York understood and capitalized upon the power of the media. By using inflammatory rhetoric, they tapped into the state's growing anxiety about the place of women and the state of womanhood. Lisa Cochran Higgins explores the anti-suffragists' use of language in her essay, "Adulterous Individualism, Socialism, and Free Love in Nineteenth-Century Anti-Suffrage Writing." Higgins notes that one of the most

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common themes in anti-suffrage pieces was a fear of female adultery, the fear that suffrage would “trigger the ‘carnal appetite of women,’” and “lead to the ‘moral vertigo’ of America.”¹⁷ Behind this anti-suffrage fear of adultery lay the belief that to participate in democratic politics was to abandon woman’s “natural role as the central pillar of domestic life.”¹⁸ Anti-suffragists believed that the definition of womanhood lay within the confines of the domestic sphere. Thus seeking entrance into the public sphere was to “undermine the nation’s most important institution, the family,” and upset the very definition of womanhood in the process.¹⁹

The belief that women moving outside the domestic sphere would lead to the downfall of American society was not limited to condemnations of women’s suffrage. The rhetoric used by anti-suffragists in New York, both in speeches and in newspaper articles, mirrors the language used to critique the New Woman as well. Attacks on the New Woman published in the *NYT* framed their critiques in highly negative terms, often focusing on the decay of marriage in American society as proof of the toxicity of changing societal norms. These articles promote the idea that the essence of true womanhood is domesticity and to stray outside of its confines was to betray nature. In an article published on 22 September 1907, Anna Rogers blames the advancement of the New Woman for the destruction of

¹⁷ Lisa Cochran Higgins, “Adulterous Individualism, Socialism, and Free Love in Nineteenth-Century Anti-Suffrage Writing,” *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers* 21 no. 2 (2004): 2

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid, 3.

American marriages. Rogers attributes America's increasing rate of failed marriages to the modern woman's inability to understand her role as a wife. She contends that, "marriage is woman's work in the world, not man's," and that men are rightfully "the world's workers, breadwinners, home builders, fighters, supporters of civic duties... and the world's idealists."²⁰ Rogers notes that the unjustified expansion of women into the public sphere has left the modern woman "unprepared, undisciplined, uncounseled, impatient of less a thing than godhood itself," and when challenged by marriage, "she often refuses to adjust the yoke to her inexperienced shoulders, and more often throws it off, glorifying in the assertion of her 'persistent self.'"²¹ Throughout the article, Rogers asserts that in her failure to understand her place, the New Woman is slowly destroying America.

Perhaps the most virulent article published during the period was a critique of both New Women and suffragists written in 1911 by Emily McLean. In the article, entitled "Fewer Marriages Among Women of the Future," McLean opines that this "new tendency of womankind," when combined with suffrage, will have "grave effects on matrimony." McLean goes on to indicate that a fall in marriage rates will ultimately lead to a decreased rate in childbirth among middle to upper class women, as "women cannot have perfect freedom and perfect babies at the same time."

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McLean, therefore, contends that the New Woman and the granting of suffrage to women would be “race suicide,” “the ultimate destruction of humanity,” and “the desolation of the home and Nation.” Finishing off her egregious charges, McLean describes suffrage as “a cup with bitter dregs,” and describes the New Woman’s motives as nothing less than “pure selfishness.”²²

Just as the glowing support of the *LAT* for the New Woman created a positive and encouraging public and political space for suffragists in California, the frequent and pernicious negative views of the New Woman and suffragists published in the *NYT* encouraged a dismissive and dissenting space for public women in which New York’s anti-suffragists thrived. Both papers published rhetorically concurrent articles approximately 75% of the time. That is, between 1900 and 1920, for every negative article published about the New Woman in the *LAT*, three positive articles were published. The same statistic holds true for the *NYT*, but in reverse, with negative articles outweighing the positive. As a result, California’s suffrage movement flourished where New York’s foundered, and ultimately, this continued to alter the representation of women, even after women in each state were granted the right to vote.

California was the sixth state to grant women the right to vote. On 10 October 1911, the California voters approved Proposition 4 as part of a special referendum. Surprisingly, the amendment passed by

²² Edward Marshall, “Fewer Marriages Among Women of the Future,” *New York Times*, 1 Jan. 1911, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

a small margin of only 3,587 votes.²³ According to Mead, this smaller margin of victory than expected was due to the persistent negative attitudes towards women that existed in northern cities like San Francisco and Oakland. It took the support of the rural farm voters as well as a few key larger cities, like Los Angeles (which passed the bill as expected), for women to win the vote.²⁴

New York women, on the other hand, had to wait until 1917 to secure the right to vote. Like California, universal suffrage in New York was presented as an amendment to the New York state constitution that would be voted on during a special referendum. By 7 November 1917, it was official: the two million women of New York had been granted the right to vote by a statewide majority of 92,000 votes.²⁵ Anne Benjamin credits the large margin of victory to suffragists' increasingly patriotic tactics during the 1917 campaign. When the U.S. entered the Great War, suffragists did all they could to link universal suffrage to patriotic duty, thus propagandizing the suffragists as good Americans.²⁶

While the circumstances under which each state granted women the right to vote were certainly linked to the ways in which women were portrayed in the press coverage of their state, it must be stressed that

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the media did not cause the passage of universal suffrage in either California or New York. Instead, the press coverage of the New Woman, suffragists, and antis in both the *LAT* and the *NYT* helped shape and reflect public perception of these feminine social groups. The public and vocal existence of these groups and the resulting press coverage in the *NYT* and *LAT* created a mutually productive environment where both sides served to reinforce the popular public discourse. In California, this produced an environment where the New Woman and the suffragists were given greater credence and credibility, while in New York, this engendered a decisively negative environment in which the New Woman was often scorned while the anti was highlighted as the reasonable thinker.

Although margins of victory in each state may suggest greater support for suffrage in New York, the specific timing of the passage of suffrage was more significant. California women were granted universal suffrage ahead of New York women by a full six years, and they beat the national legislation by eight. But perhaps more important than either the year or the margin of victory are the attitudes that remained after the elections. An article in the *LAT* published on 6 December 1911 reports the results of the recent mayoral election in Los Angeles, and heartily praises the female voters for their role. The reporter triumphantly declares, “the power of the new women voters was most effective,” and praises the women for voting so wisely.²⁷ The reporter continues the praise, noting,

²⁷ “A Sweeping Victory for Good Government,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Dec. 1911, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

“in every way their influence at the polls was in the interest of true American government.”²⁸ Finally, in what was perhaps a jab at San Francisco’s vote against universal suffrage in the recent referendum, the reporter instructs, “San Francisco will please take notice.”²⁹ Even with the slim margin of victory for women voters in California, the *LAT* continued to positively represent the New Woman and the suffragists’ cause.

Given the large margin of victory for universal suffrage in the New York, one may think the *NYT* would be inclined to shift coverage to be more supportive of the New Woman and the suffragists. But this was not the case. Even after the passage of universal suffrage in New York, the anti-suffrage movement was still alive and well and gathering significant coverage in the *NYT*. In a letter to the editor published on 19 February 1918, Helen Harman-Brown writes that the anti-suffragists will “have the satisfaction of saying ‘I told you so,’” when the next election comes around. She decries the fact that in the next election, the state will be “dominated” by “the 400,000 foreign women voters unable even to understand or use the English language.”³⁰ In order to curtail such a foreign take over, Harman-Brown urges “that it is not too late for the Anti-Suffrage Party to demand a resubmission of this question to the people (men and women) of this State.” She goes on to claim, “The results of such a

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resubmission few will doubt and all should accept as final.”³¹

Even after women in each state were granted the right to vote a few years before their national peers, articles in the *LAT* and *NYT* continued use the old tropes of the New Woman, suffragists, and antis that had developed in their states during the 1900s and early 1910s. Indeed, they continued to promote the ideas that the newspapers themselves had helped create. The results of the 1911 and 1917 referendums in California and New York show that press coverage in the *LAT* and *NYT* were not solely responsible for the outcomes of the elections. If this had been the case, Californians would have passed universal suffrage resoundingly, while New Yorkers would have just barely passed the amendment, or perhaps not at all. However, the timing of the referendums was most likely affected by the electoral mood in each state, and this mood was in part defined by the attitudes represented in the *LAT* and *NYT*. Furthermore, the post-electoral press coverage suggests that the attitudes in each state were still affected by the newspapers’ view on women in society. In New York, Benjamin notes that anti-suffrage leagues continued to rally against universal suffrage after it was passed at a federal level. Mirroring the attitude of Harman-Brown in the *NYT*, in May 1919 the Women Voters’ Anti-Suffrage Party urged its constituents to not quit “but rather to reopen hostilities with renewed vigor.”³² Meanwhile, in California, the successful suffragists extended their

³¹ Ibid.

³² Records of the NAWSA, Box 40, June 1919, Library of Congress, quoted in Benjamin, *Women Against Equality*, 272.

campaigns and “took their innovative ideas to other state campaigns, the Congressional Union, the National Women’s Party, and the final battle for the federal woman suffrage amendment.”³³

From 1900-1920, the press coverage in the *LAT* and *NYT* concerning the New Woman, suffragists and anti-suffragists played a role in the perception of women and what women could and should do during the turbulent times of the early twentieth century. More importantly, the language used in each paper to support or attack the New Woman was the same language used to support or attack the suffragists. This in turn helped create environments in which either suffragist or anti-suffragists thrived. In California, the positive coverage of the New Woman and the suffragist allowed suffragists to sustain a popular movement that lasted well beyond the granting of universal suffrage in 1911. Conversely, in New York, the negative coverage of the New Woman and the suffragist allowed the anti-suffrage movement to gain significant traction. Not only did New York’s intense anti-suffrage movement most likely delay the vote for universal suffrage until 1917, but it also allowed for the continuation of the anti movement, even after universal suffrage was considered a federal right. By examining the newspapers’ coverage of the New Woman, the suffragists, and the antis in light of the universal suffrage movements within each state, one can clearly observe a link between the press coverage and the environment in which the movements struggled or thrived. And for historians seeking to understand the development of the suffrage and anti-suf-

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frage movements in New York and California, such a link is undoubtedly newsworthy.

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No Room for Error: How a Breakdown in Naval Communication Led to a Needless Tragedy

Phillip Di Tullio

The horrific events that took place on 11 September 2001 are forever carved into the American psyche. An estimated 3,000 lives were lost in the World Trade Center alone. The list of casualties includes nearly 2,800 civilians. Perhaps the most appalling is the staggering number of first responders – 343 firefighters and sixty police officers – who were killed while attempting to save civilian lives. Even more offensive are the reasons why they died: faulty radios and improper communication within, and between, the New York fire and police departments.¹ These internal failures in the wake of external attacks compound the tragedy and reveal the vital nature of effective and efficient communication, a factor too frequently underappreciated. Communication failures in history confirm this assessment. A case in point is the sinking of the U.S.S. *Indianapolis* in 1945, known as the worst open-sea disaster in U.S. Naval history, which took the lives of nine hundred men.

The attack took place fifteen minutes after midnight on 30 July 1945, when the bow of the U.S. Naval heavy-cruiser, *Indianapolis*, was struck by two Japanese torpedoes. Just twelve minutes later the vessel,

along with three hundred of its men, sank to the ocean floor. The surviving sailors swam hurriedly from the wreckage. Nearly nine hundred men went into the water after the *Indianapolis*' sinking; by the time help arrived nearly four days later, only 316 survived. Among those survivors was the ship's captain, Charles B. McVay III, who was later court-martialed by the Navy and convicted of not taking the appropriate measures to protect the ship – a charge clearly intended to spare the Navy any further embarrassment stemming from the tragedy.²

The survivors, meanwhile, were outraged by the conviction of their captain, and accused the High Command of using McVay as a scapegoat for the disaster. Vital information was withheld from McVay prior to the *Indianapolis*' final voyage, which led to a lessened state of alert.³ Although McVay reported that distress calls were sent before the ship sank, the Navy insisted that none were received. Information declassified in 1999 refutes the Navy's claim.⁴ Furthermore, when *Indianapolis* failed to arrive at its destination in the Philippine islands on 31 July, no one at the base reported the ship as missing. Following Captain McVay's posthumous exoneration by the US Congress in October of 2000, blame still needs to be assigned for the sinking of the *Indianapolis*; the role that communication failures played in the death of hundreds of sailors needs to be carefully assessed.

² Senate Committee on Armed Services, *The Sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis and the Subsequent Court Martial of Rear Adm. Charles B. McVay III*, USN, 106th Cong., 1st sess., 1999, 29.

³ Ibid., 30.

⁴ Ibid., 39.

Following the court martial of Captain McVay, the sinking of the *Indianapolis* slowly faded from the minds of the American public. Steven Spielberg's 1975 cinematic classic, *Jaws*, reintroduced the subject when Captain Quint, a fictional survivor of the *Indianapolis*, retold the story of the sinking. Quint's famous monologue sparked a wave of new scholarship examining the causes of the disaster. The most complete analysis of the onshore communication errors prior to and immediately following the attack appears in Dan Kurzman's *Fatal Voyage* (1990). Kurzman explores the communication breakdown between the major players involved in the sinking and delayed rescue: the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington (CNO), the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command (CINCPAC), and Captain McVay.⁵ Meanwhile, Doug Stanton's *In Harm's Way* (2001), discusses the onboard communication failures during the ship's sinking.⁶ This paper synthesizes all of the Navy's miscommunications – before, during, and after the sinking – that led to the disaster, revealing the enormity of the communication failures at all levels and phases of the event. While the Navy's official intelligence report in 1945 stated, "all of the products of intelligence must be available to all branches and all specialists," this was not the case with the *Indianapolis*.⁷ A careful reexamination of the

evidence reveals that the avoidable tragedy was not only the ship's sinking, but also the delay in rescuing its survivors; and was due to a complex web of factors, including flaws in, and violations of, naval communication procedures during an unprecedented event.

The *Indianapolis* played a crucial role in World War II's Pacific theater. The ship was commissioned in 1932 as a combat vessel used to bomb onshore, enemy encampments. Equipped with a laundry-mat, butchery, and even its own water plant, the *Indianapolis* "was a floating city... [with] enough weaponry to lay siege to downtown San Francisco."⁸ The ship was put under command of Captain McVay in 1944; becoming the flagship of the Navy's Fifth Fleet under Admiral Raymond Spruance.⁹ During the Battle of Iwo Jima, the *Indianapolis* served as the Command Ship and took part in the bombing of the island. Following the U.S. victory at Iwo Jima, the ship shot down seven Kamikaze planes as part of the pre-invasion bombardment of Okinawa before returning to the San Francisco Bay for repairs. It was in San Francisco that the *Indianapolis* was given a mission deemed vital to U.S. victory in the war. Two heavily guarded crates were secured onto the deck of the ship. Unbeknownst to the crew, the crates contained weapons grade uranium-235 core – the key component of a nuclear weapon – and the "Little Boy" atomic bomb, which would be dropped on Hiroshima.¹⁰ The crew was intrigued by the mysterious crates, and its curiosity was intensified when Captain McVay broadcast a message he had

⁸ Stanton, 27.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 36.

received just moments before setting sail: “*Indianapolis* under orders of Commander in Chief and must not be diverted from its mission for any reason.”¹¹ The *Indianapolis* departed San Francisco Bay on 16 July 1945 and arrived in Tinian on 26 July, successfully delivering the bomb.

Shortly thereafter, the *Indianapolis* was sent to the Island of Guam to refuel before joining an invasion fleet in Leyte, Philippines. The route it would take from Guam to Leyte was known in the Navy as the Peddie Convoy Route (PCR).¹² Traveling the PCR was always a challenge, for at times it was relatively safe, while at other times extremely perilous. On 24 July 1945, as the *Indianapolis* was en route to Tinian Island, a destroyer-escort, U.S.S. *Underhill*, was sunk while traveling along the PCR. The *Underhill* was brought down by a Kaiten: a secret Japanese suicide torpedo. Kaitens traveled in packs led by the largest, most effective Japanese submarines, called Tamons. When driven into a ship, the Kaitens detonated, causing catastrophic damage. The *Underhill* was cut directly in half upon impact.¹³

Members of a top secret U.S. code-breaking project known as ULTRA had been working tirelessly to break Japanese codes concerning the Kaitens. After the attack on the *Underhill*, ULTRA was able to officially confirm the existence of the suicide crafts. Furthermore, ULTRA discovered the presence of Tamons near the PCR. Worried that the Japanese would know their

codes had been broken, ULTRA refused to wirelessly transmit the position of Tamons, even if a ship was in danger of attack.¹⁴ The information involving Kaitens, Tamons, and the sinking of the *Underhill* was labeled as ultra-secret and sent to CNO, where it would have to trickle down the chain of command.

The relaying of PCR information is the first breakdown in communication that led to the *Indianapolis*' sinking. Admiral Ernest King, Commander in Chief of CNO and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was the Navy's head honcho. His office in Washington was the first to receive the report from ULTRA about the PCR and the *Underhill*. Captain Samuel Anderson, who worked as the Pacific Fleet Operations Officer for Admiral King, read the report and was frightened by what he saw. Immediately, he drafted a dispatch to Admiral Chester Nimitz, the Commander in Chief of CINCPAC, advising him to change the *Indianapolis*' route. Anderson's superior, however, stopped the dispatch before it was sent out and promised that a higher authority – Admiral King – would handle the issue.¹⁵

Apparently, Captain Anderson was the only Navy officer to make a forthright effort to relay the information. The report was sent from the CNO office to CINCPAC, where it reached combat intelligence officer, Captain E.T. Layton. Layton sent the information to Vice Admiral Charles McMorris and Commodore James Carter, Admiral Nimitz' chief of staff and assistant chief of staff, respectively. No one appeared willing to take responsibility for this ultra-secret intelligence

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Kurzman, 45.

report, as once again, the information was sent to another department. This time Captain Oliver Naquin, operations officer for a sub-division of CINCPAC called the Marianas Command, was the recipient. Naquin, paranoid and consumed with maintaining intelligence integrity, locked the report in his office.¹⁶ Naquin was so wrapped up in “[intelligence] security that he seemed prepared to jeopardize the safety of a particular ship in order to maintain the integrity of the system.”¹⁷

Although vital information was withheld from him, Captain McVay was briefed on the potential hazards along the PCR on three separate occasions. First, he was given a briefing by Lieutenant Joseph Waldron, the routing officer for the port director. McVay, who had no knowledge of the *Underhill*'s fate, inquired about the safety of the PCR and even requested an escort to Leyte. Waldron called Naquin's office with the request, and was told that no escort was needed. Waldron, like McVay, was not informed of the sinking of the *Underhill*; so he assured McVay that “there was nothing out of the ordinary in the area.”¹⁸ Next, McVay met with Commodore Carter. Carter, although fully aware of the report, assumed that Lieutenant Waldron would pass on such information, and did not mention the issue to McVay. Finally, McVay had lunch with his Fleet Commander, Admiral Spruance. Once again, the life saving information was withheld from McVay. There are only two explanations for Spruance's failure to alert his flagship's captain to the dangers awaiting

McVay on the PCR: CINCPAC did not give the information to Spruance, or the Admiral felt the report was too ultra-secret to divulge.¹⁹ However, it is unlikely that a fleet commander would not be warned of a serious threat to his flagship, especially when the information had crossed the desk of his superior, Admiral Nimitz. After three briefings, McVay still remained unaware of the dangers that awaited him and his crew; and on 28 July 1945, he and the ill-fated *Indianapolis* set sail for Leyte.

McVay was well aware of the Navy decree, "Commanding Officers are at all times responsible for the safe navigation of their ships," and must, during times of good visibility, "zigzag at discretion of the Commanding Officer."²⁰ He spent all of 29 July 1945 zigzagging through the PCR. By eight o'clock pm, visibility had become poor, and he ordered the ship to stop zigzagging. Prior to retiring to his bunk at eleven o'clock, McVay ordered his officers to "resume zigzagging at their own discretion," and "to wake him if there were any weather changes."²¹ At 12:15 A.M. on 30 July, two torpedoes from the Japanese submarine I-58 struck the *Indianapolis*. The first caused the most structural damage to the ship, exploding its bow. More ominously, the second destroyed the ship's power center, rendering the ship's internal communications useless. McVay immediately returned to the bridge and ordered a distress signal be sent marking the ship's

¹⁹ Ibid., 45.

²⁰ Raymond B. Lech, *The Tragic Fate of the U.S.S. Indianapolis: The U.S. Navy's Worst Disaster at Sea* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), 211.

²¹ Kenneth E. Ethridge, "The Agony of the Indianapolis," *American Heritage Magazine* 33, no. 5 (August 1982): 1.

location, indicating that it had been hit by torpedoes, and that immediate assistance was required. Since communications were down, the Captain's orders had to be sent by runner. With no means of efficiently communicating with the crew en masse, his orders were unknown to most onboard. To make sure the distress signal was sent, McVay ordered Commander John Janney to the communications center. However, radio shack one, which was used to send messages, was completely wrecked.²² Radio shack two, used to receive messages, remained functional after the second hit. Herbert Miner, a technician in radio shack two, worked with Communications Warrant Officer L.T. Woods to quickly transform the receiver into a transmitter. Miner watched as Woods furiously keyed out the distress signal. According to Miner, "the antenna needle jump[ed]... indicating that the message was in fact being transmitted."²³ Unaware if any distress signal had been sent, Captain McVay gave the order to abandon ship. Minutes later, the *Indianapolis* sank, stranding nine hundred soldiers in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

The *Indianapolis* was scheduled to arrive in Leyte at eleven o'clock on the morning of 31 July 1945.²⁴ As evening approached, Lieutenant Stuart Gibson, the port director of the Harbor Entrance Control Post (HECP) in Leyte, noticed the *Indianapolis*' tardiness. Gibson was not disturbed, for he fully expected the ship to arrive in port, and, without recording an arrival time, added it to the Ships Present list. CINCPAC

protocol stated “arrivals not to be reported for combatant ships.”²⁵ Furthermore, it was commonplace for a cruiser, particularly a flagship, to be redirected without notice. This matter of the *Indianapolis*’ whereabouts was better suited for the fleet commanders in Leyte, but Gibson never relayed the message to his superior officers. One of those commanders was Captain Alfred Granum, operations officer of the Frontier Command. Although the *Indianapolis* was in his area of responsibility, Granum assumed that a distress signal would have been sent in any case of danger. Like Gibson, Granum figured a higher-ranking official would handle the issue; once again, superior officers were not contacted.²⁶

Adding to the tragic comedy of errors, the lack of communication and knowledge of the *Indianapolis*’ whereabouts was present even among the highest-ranking officers in Leyte. Rear Admiral L.D. McCormick was also aware of the *Indianapolis*’ scheduled time of arrival, but did not know why the ship was coming. McVay and the *Indianapolis* were being sent to Admiral McCormick to receive training prior to joining Vice Admiral Jesse Oldendorf’s Tokyo invasion fleet. Oldendorf, on the other hand, knew why the ship was being sent to McCormick, but was unaware of its anticipated arrival time.²⁷ When asked why neither commander knew such vital information, Oldendorf explained that the Okinawa communications center was “notoriously inefficient in the forwarding of mes-

²⁵ Ibid., 120.

²⁶ Ibid., 122.

²⁷ Ibid., 123.

sages.”²⁸ The communication problems within the port of Leyte, however, exacerbated the issue. Had one of these three commanders taken the initiative to pinpoint the *Indianapolis*’ whereabouts, hundreds of lives could have been saved. Unfortunately, nearly six hundred soldiers died in the water due to a lack of action and bureaucratic red tape that prevented effective communication.

No one in the port of Leyte took responsibility for the missing cruiser, but there remained the possibility that the frantic distress signals sent out before it sank would save the remaining stranded soldiers. Although it was likely that the message was received in multiple locations, it was equally likely that the recipients believed the message to be a Japanese prank. There are three documented recipients of the *Indianapolis*’ distress calls, all revealed by witnesses years after the war. The first message was received, in a radio shack on Leyte, by a young soldier on security duty, Clair Young. Young stated that the message was “garbled,” but still “identified the ship, its position, and its condition.”²⁹ After bringing the message to his superior officer, Young was told not to reply, however, “if further messages are received, notify me immediately.”³⁰ The second message was received by another radio shack in Leyte. This time, the on-duty officer responded immediately by ordering two fast, Navy tugs to the received coordinates. Meanwhile, Commodore Norman Gillette, in charge of naval operations on the island, was playing bridge with some fellow officers.

Upon hearing that tugs had been dispatched without his knowledge, Gillette had them recalled. The tugs were seven hours into the twenty-one hour trip.³¹ The third, and final documented message was received by a landing craft docked in Leyte harbor. The craft received duplicate signals, eight minutes apart; it tried to contact the *Indianapolis*, but could not get a response. The craft sent the signals to the naval operating base in Leyte, but received no reply.³² Ironically, just as three commanders withheld vital information from Captain McVay prior to his voyage, the *Indianapolis*' distress calls were ignored by three different radio shacks on the Island of Leyte, vividly illustrating the potential for multiple failures in communications and the need for duplication and confirmation.

The defense of a nation in wartime is as dangerous as it is difficult, and proper communication is key to the success of the Armed Forces. The tragedy of the U.S.S. *Indianapolis* is clearly the result of improper communication on every level. The *Indianapolis* was uninformed of the imminent danger that loomed along the PCR, and was unprepared for such an attack. Furthermore, the ship's line of communication was broken during the attack. This prevented Captain McVay from effectively relaying vital orders to his engine room and radio shacks. Finally, confusion regarding the *Indianapolis*' whereabouts, due mostly to a lack of initiative and faulty communication among Navy officers in the Pacific, lead to the unnecessary deaths of nearly nine hundred U.S. service members. To protect the High Command from public embarrass-

³¹ Stanton, 133.

³² Ibid., 134.

ment, McVay was forced to bear full responsibility for the tragedy. McVay nobly endured a rare and highly public court-martial, which permanently tarnished his decorated record. Suffocating under the immense weight of guilt, McVay took his own life on 6 November 1968. Today, the remaining survivors of the *Indianapolis* uphold his honor. This dwindling group of extraordinary soldiers recognizes the fault lies not with their beloved captain; but rather with the Navy High Brass, which, by the withholding of vital information, compounded with systematic inefficiency, allowed the worst open-sea disaster in U.S. Naval history.

This recognition of the vital nature of effective communications comes with it valuable lessons that can save lives if heeded, and cost them if ignored. A second look at the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center reveals avoidable errors largely due to a lack of communication between police and fire departments, and the use of sub par radios. Suicide bombers, torpedoes, and other attacks may be beyond all control, but creating and enforcing effective communication is not. The breakdowns in New York first-responder communication are eerily similar to those that led to the sinking of the *Indianapolis*: lack of efficient institutional communication and ignored radio messages. Both events – the loss of 343 New York firefighters and the deaths of nine hundred U.S. soldiers – serve as a tragic testament of the importance of flawless communication, including an established and responsible chain of command; multiple channels, checks, and confirmation; and state of the art equipment suitable to the task, among the men and women who defend those who cannot defend themselves.

No Room for Error

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Reclaiming Identity: Finding One's Place as a French Jew in the Post World War II Period

Kathleen O'Rourke

Fifty years after the end of WWII, French President Jacques Chirac said, "There are moments in the life of a nation that hurt the memory and the idea one has of his country."¹ President Chirac made this statement at the 1995 commemoration of the July 1942 Velodrome d'Hiver roundup of Jews in Paris, one of the many instances of the violent mistreatment of Jews under France's Vichy Regime during the Holocaust. On June 22, 1940, when France surrendered to Nazi Germany, the Third Republic was dissolved and the collaborationist Vichy Regime was set up by Marshal Henri Petain. From the outset, Vichy pursued anti-Semitic policies, such as the October 1940 "Statute on Jews" which forced racial segregation, making Jews a lower class. There was a noted difference in Vichy's attitude toward French Jews and Jewish refugees in France. During the 1930's thousands of Jews from Eastern Europe fled to France, seeing it as a safe harbor due to its professed republican ideals. When Vichy instigated policies against the Jews, they targeted refugee Jews before French Jews.

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In the immediate post war period, the French people- both non-Jews and Jews who had either remained in France or returned after the war- were left to deal with the consequences of Vichy. French Jews were placed in a complicated situation; the seemingly competing ideas of nationality and religion left postwar Jews trying to re-discover their place in the nation. As for the rest of the French people, rather than confronting the actions of the recent past, they denied and revised history. The French identity as a country of freedom and liberty directly conflicted with the actions of Vichy France during the Holocaust; as a result the French chose to ignore the past, leaving the French Jews to grapple with the relationship of their religion and nationality in the wake of WWII.

The complexities surrounding the French relationship with the Jews were not unique to the post-World War II period. Historically, the French have been engaged in a battle to maintain “purity” in their identity. Purity, meaning, that one had to give up all other identities (religious, political, ethnic, social, etc.) in order to completely embrace the French identity. That is why the difference between French Jews and refugee Jews was so important. The French were willing to accept outsiders as their own if they completely assimilated. It is this secular, singular understanding of citizenship that unifies all French people. This collective French identity has been a continuous theme throughout French history, and can be seen clearly during, and after, World War II. Their need for preservation of identity was what allowed the French to ignore their wartime faults, and allow the creation of a postwar myth that portrayed the French nation as

victims, much to the expense of the Jews throughout the nation.

There are many aspects of the problem of French national memory and the memory of French Jews following World War II. The relationship between Vichy France and the Jews during the war may be viewed as grounded in the long held anti-Semitic views of French citizens who assisted the Vichy regime with their anti-Semitic policies. Robert Paxton and Michael Marrus, in *Vichy and the Jews*, analyze the openly anti-Semitic views of the French who were a part of the Vichy regime, and the support of many ordinary French citizens.² Paxton and Marrus note that while France was the first European nation to grant the Jews full civil rights at the end of the Eighteenth century, French people were also the most ardent supporters of secular anti-Semitism at the end of the Nineteenth century. These complexities are part of the reason that Vichy policy towards the Jews was successful; the mindset of anti-Semitism did not arrive with the Germans, rather, it was already common in France. The actions of the Vichy regime could not have been carried through without some level of consent from the people. As the authors state, "No occupying power, however, can administer territory by force alone...successful occupations depend heavily upon accomplices."³ The authors believe it was French anti-Semites who initiated and allowed the cruel Vichy policies to be implemented, with no help from the

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Germans until they, the Germans, decided to implement their Final Solution in France in 1942.

While Paxton and Marrus focus on the events that occurred under Vichy rule, other scholars have sought to understand the complexities that the regime left for the psyche of the French nation, complexities that continued to plague the nation long after the war ended. In his book, *The Vichy Syndrome*, leading scholar Henry Rousso explains that the events under Vichy continued to live on until the French were able to come to terms with their past.⁴ Rousso asserts that after the war, acknowledging the actions of the Vichy government was more difficult for the French people than coming to terms with the Occupation itself. This problem creates a conflict between the areas of memory and history. Rousso confronts this challenge by looking at the stages of the postwar myth as they unfolded chronologically, and how each was addressed by the nation. He called the first stage from 1945-1953 the Unfinished Mourning. During this time, the French people sought revenge in the case of collaborators, while ignoring Vichy's anti-Semitism. There was also a distinct tension between glorifying the Resistance and forgetting the collaborators. To move away from the tension, the French instead focused on the crimes of other nations during the war, most especially Germany. Rousso's explanation of this first stage is essential to this paper because it addresses the feelings and actions of the French government and French non-Jews. To understand how the French Jews felt in postwar France, it is essential to understand the

⁴ Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

actions of the rest of the country, something Roussio explains in his book.

Another area of important scholarship is the study of politics and memory. History is always told by the victor, which presents France with a peculiar situation; choosing whether to be seen as a country of resistance or accepting responsibility for Vichy. Revealing how the French have attempted to understand and confront their role in the Holocaust is a main focus of Caroline Wiedmer's book, *The Claims of Memory: Representations of the Holocaust in Contemporary Germany and France*.⁵ Wiedmer outlines the evolution of the battle of memory through an examination of film, memorials, museums, and commemorations. Sometimes what is not said or done can be more telling of the atmosphere of a country than what was done, as is evidenced by France's lack of formal recognition of their role in the cruel treatment of the Jews during WWII, until Chirac's 1995 speech noted above. France's physical dedications and remembrances tell the most about how the country was torn between trying to forget the atrocities of the Holocaust, while simultaneously needing to remember them, which has unfortunately come across as ambivalence. The perceived ambivalence of the earlier post-war period was atoned for with the later memorials at the Vel d'Hiv and Drancy. Wiedmer's writing shows that how others understood France's dealing with the remnants of the war impacted France itself in the shaping of memory. Overall, the book is a testament

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to the complexities of the great debate around the construction of memory.

The place of the French Jews, and the relationship between their French identity and Jewish identity, is something that is not thoroughly examined in any particular book. While the above historians all contribute to the conversation on postwar Jewish identity, none addresses the problem in its full complexity. This paper attempts to focus on the problems and attitudes of the French Jews in postwar France, while acknowledging the importance their historical relationship plays in their understanding of what occurred under Vichy and after.

The historical place of the Jews in France begins in the Eighteenth century. Europe's Enlightenment thinkers raised questions of oppression, discrimination, and universal human rights. The Jews were a frequent topic of discussion in many philosophical circles. The so-called "Jewish question" raised the issue of the Jewish people's place in French society. The general attitude in French politics and intellectual circles seemed to be, "Even if it was impossible to contemplate ending discrimination toward the Jews altogether...one nonetheless detects a desire for equal treatment."⁶ In the Eighteenth century the Jews themselves were generally not looking for political rights; rather they wanted to be left alone to live in peace. However, the French Revolution had just begun, and when the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen was drafted, the Jews submitted their

⁶ Esther Benbassa, *The Jews of France: A History from Antiquity to the Present* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 78.

grievances about the disparity between the Jews and the rest of French society. At the same time, riots broke out in Alsace, and the Jews were held responsible for the resulting strife. Also during this time, religious tolerance was granted to all non-Catholics through the 1787 Edict of Versailles.⁷ With this edict of toleration, French Calvinists, Protestants, and Jews were given the freedom to practice their own religion, but the Jews still desired more. It was in this setting that, on August 26, 1789, the Parisian Jews wrote to the National Assembly demanding the right of citizenship.⁸ Debate over the place of the Jews continued on for months. During a discussion on December 23, 1789, Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre asserted that the Jews, “must make up neither a political body nor an order within the State; they must individually be citizens.”⁹ Clermont-Tonnere is referring to the communal status that the Jews in France had. The Jewish people had their own independent communities, which provided educational, social, and medical services for their people. Previously, as long as the Jews paid their taxes, the government was not concerned with how they lived their lives.¹⁰ However, if the Jews wanted to gain French citizenship, they would lose the right to group autonomy. The French were willing to accept other peoples into their culture and society as long as the other peoples first renounced any other group ties.

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On September 27, 1791 Jews in France were granted citizenship by a proclamation known as the Emancipation of the Jews, but only if they gave up their communal status. Citizenship for Jews was something the National Assembly was willing to grant, but it came with a price. However, the French Jews were the first in Europe to be emancipated. The Emancipation of the Jews set precedence for the future relationship between Jewish identity and French citizenship. Giving up their communal status was not the first time French Jews would be asked to give up part of themselves to better fit with French identity.

One hundred years after gaining French citizenship, the French Jews would be confronted with one of the most noteworthy events in French Jewish history, the Dreyfus Affair. The Dreyfus Affair set off a flurry of anti-Semitic feelings in France and caused quite a stir throughout Europe. In September 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a French Jew, was accused by French army intelligence of penning a letter, known as the *bordereau*, to the German military attaché at the embassy in Paris.¹¹ Although Dreyfus professed his innocence, he was arrested and put in prison in October, convicted of treason December 22, and sentenced to “life in a fortified compound” on Devil’s Island.¹² Dreyfus appealed his case, but the request was rejected.

While Dreyfus’s sentence did not originally raise any controversy, other than amongst Jews, new information came to light in 1896 that cast doubt on his conviction. A French journalist’s exposure of the

¹¹ Benbassa, 141.

¹² Ibid.

Dreyfus case's conflicting findings led to public division on the matter. The public tended to side with one of two groups, the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards. The Dreyfusards sought to defend justice and the rights of man, in addition to rehabilitating the victim. Dreyfusards also tended to be anti-military and anti-Catholic. The anti-Dreyfusards did not want a review of the case. This group tended to attract military men, anti-Semites, and Catholics. The clashing views on the case evolved into an overall disagreement on politics in general. The anger and resentment of both sides were so consuming that President Emile Loubet pardoned Dreyfus in September 1899 to try to put an end to the passions enflamed by the affair. Dreyfus was finally granted rehabilitation and reinstated in the army in July 1906.¹³ It is also important to note that in the midst of the Dreyfus affair France passed an act known as the Separation of Church and State in December 1905.¹⁴ This policy was the cornerstone for maintaining a strong secular state, something that would be a defining characteristic of the French state in years to come, however, also something that would be challenged under Vichy.

The interwar period saw a large influx of Jewish immigrants to France from other parts of Europe. Around 200,000 Jewish immigrants arrived in France between 1906 and 1939, making up fifteen percent of total immigration during that period.¹⁵ Due to the high death toll of World War I, France was in need of laborers, so the large number of immigrants was not

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met with the disdain one might expect. However, these Jews were different from the French Jews. The immigrant Jews practiced a Judaism that “did not separate the secular from religious, the individual from the community, the private sphere from the public sphere, or the fact of belonging to a people from belonging to a religion.”¹⁶ The reason the French Jews were accepted in France was that they were willing to give up some of their own cultural identity and fully embrace being French citizens. These immigrant Jews were still holding on to the communal status that the French Jews had given up over a century before. French non-Jews saw the values of the immigrant Jews as not cohesive with, and in some ways even a betrayal of, French secular values. A testament to this difference can be seen in the experience of Gilbert Michlin. He recalls in his memoir his Eastern-European Jewish father applying for French citizenship. Since Michlin was born in France he was already granted citizenship by birthright, but his mother and father were not French citizens. Even though a very secular Jew, the response to his father’s application for citizenship was, “the present request holds no interest to the nation.”¹⁷ France was not interested in accepting these foreign Jews as French citizens.

The final important component of the predicament of the French Jews in the aftermath of World War II was the relationship between Vichy and the Jews in France during that war. The German defeat of France

¹⁶ Ibid, 151.

¹⁷ Gilbert Michlin, *Of No Interest to the Nation: A Jewish Family in France 1925-1945: a Memoir* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2001), 37.

in July 1940 forced Marshal Henri Petain, with the support of the National Assembly, to form a pro-German French government at Vichy.¹⁸ Legally, Vichy's authority was limited to the unoccupied southern region of France, but Petain agreed to collaborate with Germany, thus in reality German-influenced laws were enforced in both areas. Just a week after the Vichy government was established, racial laws were put into place. One of first of such laws limited public sector employment to those with French fathers.¹⁹ Over time, the laws further limited Jews' freedoms in Vichy France. On June 2, 1941 a second *Statut des Juifs* was established, declaring that anyone with three Jewish grandparents was considered Jewish, even if they had converted to another religion. This was the first time there ever was official racial segregation in France.²⁰

The deportation of Jews from France began in May 1941, initially targeting immigrant Jews, such as those from Poland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. They were sent to work camps such as Pithiviers, located in North Central France, run entirely by the French. The most prominent Jewish roundup was the July 1942 Vel' d'Hiv. By the evening of July 17, a total of 12,884 men, women, and children were carted away either to the Velodrome d'Hiver or Drancy, later to be sent away to Auschwitz, among other camps. Three quarters of the Jews who were taken were women and children. The most shocking aspect recalled by those Jews involved was that it was the French police, not the

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Germans, who were in charge of the roundup.²¹ While the French Jews were not the targets of the early roundups, with the abolition of the Southern zone on November 11, 1942, no Jews were safe from persecution.²²

From one perspective, Vichy's anti-Semitic laws and deportations were a way for the French to prove to the Nazis that they were willing to cooperate. They believed that if they cooperated with the Germans on some level then they might be able to retain some autonomy.²³ So in this case, "Jews became a means to an end...a sacrifice for the advancement of Nazi-French relations...Jews served as a vessel for competing visions of France, as symbols for national identity."²⁴ Despite being the first in Europe to emancipate the Jews, the French have a history of anti-Semitic tendencies, regardless of their relationship with Germany during the war. Even though France's 1905 separation of church and state guaranteed religious freedom in name, French and Jewish identities still seemed to be competing identities in reality. Learning how to balance both in postwar France was especially difficult considering the environment to which they returned.

The Liberation of Paris on August 25, 1944 ushered in a new government and brought an end to the Vichy regime. Before discussing the experience of the Jews when they returned to France, it is important to analyze the country to which they were coming home.

²¹ Ibid, 105.

²² Benbassa, 173.

²³ Joan B. Wolf, *Harnessing the Holocaust: The Politics of Memory in France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 15.

²⁴ Ibid.

There is no denying that the years 1940-1944 had been a dark period for France. The country was invaded, a collaborationist government ruled, and the resulting actions of many French reflected this dark time. Living in France during those years was not an easy thing, however, the French did not display an overwhelming spirit of rebellion either. In some ways the French appeared complacent; willing to put up with the Vichy government and wait the war out. A resistance movement saved many Jews from deportation and death. Yet, the postwar French realized that their actions, as a whole, under Vichy had not been commendable. Tragedy, especially one as great as World War II, can cause people, or in this case a nation, to reconstruct memory. The reality of the past was too painful to confront immediately, so France created a distinct collective memory in regards to the war. As French author Maurice Halbwachs, who died in Buchenwald shortly before the end of WWII, said of collective memory:

Society from time to time obligates people not just to reproduce in thought previous events of their lives, but also to touch them up, to shorten them, or to complete them so that, however convinced we are that our memories are exact, we give them a prestige that reality did not possess.²⁵

Granting prestige was exactly what Charles de Gaulle aimed for on August 25, 1944, when, in only a few

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sentences, he set up the framework for the war myth that would dominate the postwar period. Wishing to unite and re-invigorate France to limit the divisive repercussions of the war, de Gaulle developed a collective memory that would re-write these chapters of French history. De Gaulle chose to focus on the vague symbolic phrase of an “eternal France” which saved the nation.²⁶ In his speech he valiantly claimed,

[Paris] Liberated by itself, by its own people with the help of the armies of France, with the support and aid of France as a whole, of fighting France, of the only France, of the true France, of eternal France.²⁷

These words are a prime example of how language can be manipulated to tell the truth one wants to promote. The picture de Gaulle paints is of a resistant, brave, unified French people, who were willing and able to free themselves from oppression. On the same day as de Gaulle’s speech, Georges Bidault proclaimed, “Vichy was and is null and void.”²⁸ In one day, the new leaders of France had wiped away the sting of Vichy by espousing a new myth. The promulgation of this myth was advantageous for France because it allowed the country to remain free of fault for any atrocities that occurred under Vichy, while simultaneously maintaining French culture and identity. It portrayed France as the victims, not the victimizers. This is known as the “Gaullist myth”, in that it did not celebrate the Resis-

²⁶ Rousso, 16.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, 17.

tance movement, but rather the French people in resistance.²⁹ The Gaullist myth, an effort to tell the past based on the needs of the present, was the first attempt by the French to retell the past rather than confront the pain that would come with the truth.

After the war, the new government sought to impose maximum sentences on top Vichy officials to promote the idea that the Vichy government had not been legitimate. However, much of the evidence that should have been used against them, such as their treatment of the Jews, was not mentioned because it would have countered the goal of portraying Vichy as the betrayal of French values, and opened the door to too many other questions regarding collaboration and the general population. Since the acknowledgement of the treatment of the Jews during the Occupation did not fit with the goals of the government, the French simply moved on. As de Gaulle said, "The time for tears is over. The time of glory has returned."³⁰ To solidify de Gaulle's notion, on January 5, 1951 a law passed granting amnesty to those collaborators whose sentencing stripped them of their citizenship rights and who were serving a prison sentence of less than fifteen years. It also forgave minors, those who were forcibly conscripted, and anyone who had already served a majority of their sentence. The law did not apply to decisions of the *Haute Cour* or those sentenced for grave crimes.³¹ However, two years later a law was passed granting clemency to all who had received the sentence of national degradation. Of

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approximately forty thousand Vichy officials sentenced to prison after the war, none remained in jail by 1964.³² The French were willing to forgive and forget if it allowed them to retain their positive notion of self.

The problems facing the Jews in their postwar return to France were legal, material, and psychological. After the overthrow of Vichy and the transfer of power to de Gaulle, the war torn country was not very stable. The Jewish people suffered immeasurably during the war, but they were also returning to a country that had been turned upside down during its occupation. Unemployment soared, food was scarce, the black market thrived, transportation had been destroyed, energy sources depleted, and as a result the country was seriously hurting.³³ It was in the midst of this trauma that the Jewish people slowly made their return to France. Due to the grim economic situation, many returned to France only to immediately leave the country once again. Salomon Berenholz was a French Jew who fled from the unoccupied zone to Switzerland, via train with false papers in 1942 due to the uncertain future for Jews in France. He returned with his family to France in late 1945, but due to the instability they decided it would be safer and wiser to immigrate to the United States.³⁴ Other French Jews no longer felt a sense of belonging in the country they had once called home. French Holocaust survivor Rosette Moss was born in Paris in 1917 and lived in France until the Gestapo arrested her and sent her to an internment

³² Wyman, 19.

³³ Wyman, 14.

³⁴ Interview with Salomon Berenholz. USC Shoah Database. Accessed 15 January 2011 at Stanford University.

camp. With the help of the Americans, she returned to France as soon as the war was over, but left the country in 1945 for London, where she got married and never looked back.³⁵ While these two survivors chose to leave their homeland following the war, many chose to stay and re-establish themselves in the country they once called home.

One of the biggest problems faced by returning Jews was restoring lost property. During the war many Jewish homes and businesses were sold to other French families. As the French Jews returned home, the resulting situation pitted French citizens against each other. Frenchmen, who had agreed to look over Jewish businesses while they were forced from their country, were now asking the returning Jews to pay them for their services. And the many French people who had purchased Jewish homes during the war were unwilling to part with “their” property. The government was left to determine who had the right to the property, and asserting the rights of the Jews was not high on their list of priorities. A law was passed that required former residents to prove they formerly owned the property and that it was taken from them against their will. Proving former ownership was difficult because in most cases, any paperwork the Jews had was destroyed during the war. In the meantime, it was illegal to force a resident to move out of the property unless they had somewhere else to stay.³⁶ When there was a large uproar from the Jewish community, the government claimed that due to a housing shortage,

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they were forced to treat all property left behind by those who were deported as abandoned. By 1951, only half of the Jews who had lost their homes or property during the war were able to regain their property.

Another struggle the French Jews faced in their return home was the loss of those who did not return. Upon their entry into Paris, deportees' first stop was often the hotel *Le Lutetia*.³⁷ The hotel had been held by the Germans during the war, but after the Liberation French social workers reclaimed the property and set it up to receive survivors who were returning from concentration camps.³⁸ The hotel became a symbol of hope for those families and friends who would crowd into its doors every day with the promise of reuniting with their loved ones. Sadly, with only three percent of French Jewish deportees returning, their waiting was often in vain.³⁹ Marguerite Duras was one of the lucky wives who was fortunate enough to welcome her husband home, but he had barely survived the camps and was on the brink of dying. The doctor who examined him upon his return to France first believed he was dead, "and then he [the doctor] realized: the form wasn't dead yet, it was hovering between life and death, and he, the doctor, had been called in to try to keep it alive."⁴⁰ Many less fortunate family members wished this could have been their situation.

³⁷ Renee Poznanski, *Jews in France During World War II* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press of New England), 462.

³⁸ Zuccotti, 204.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Marguerite Duras, *The War: A Memoir* (London: The New Press, 1994), 55.

The mythical “history” that Charles de Gaulle wrote for France created a culture of cover-ups in all areas of society. Lack of acknowledgement through media, film, and literature led to troublesome times for French Jews, and their overall silence on the matter, while not necessarily approval, was a nod of acquiescence.⁴¹ The general lack of protest from the Jewish community could be attributed to the intense trauma that they experienced during the war. For those who had experienced the death camps, and even for those who had managed to stay in France, the knowledge of what had happened was too overwhelming to bear. In fact, Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel said “ So heavy was my anguish that I made a vow: not to speak, not to touch upon the essential [the Holocaust] for at least ten years. Long enough to see clearly.”⁴² To fight the Gaullist myth that was being perpetuated would have required the Jewish community to come to terms with what they had experienced, and at whose hands, for which many were not ready. For both France and the French Jewish community, living in denial in the immediate postwar years was easier than facing the truth.

To perpetuate the Gaullist myth, it was important that the literature and film of the time be in alignment. While there was no governmental conspiracy to ensure that the only works produced were those that sided with the myth, it is important to acknowledge the cultural climate in which literature and film was being produced. The title of Jean-Paul Sartre’s 1948 essay,

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Anti-Semite and Jew, would make one think that one of society's great philosophers was taking up the cause of the Jews in France. Sartre attempted to explain the origins and causes of anti-Semitic hate. He claimed it is a feeling of passion, but one without rationality. Sartre boldly asserted that, "If the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him."⁴³ While Sartre attempted to intellectually explain anti-Semitic feelings, it is what he did not mention that is even more striking. Sartre stayed glaringly quiet on the subject of the Holocaust. Sartre did mention extermination once, but without any detail, and did not reference the recent history that would have been key evidence for his ideas.⁴⁴ His omission of the Holocaust in an essay written mostly in the fall of 1944 seems unacceptable to those who would read it today. However, it is a prime example of the culture of postwar France. Sartre was actually making a bold move by writing about anti-Semitism at all in this period. Many Jews wrote to Sartre to thank him for not forgetting about them.⁴⁵ And the way in which he approached the topic of anti-Semitism, in relation to community, was very "French" in general. He believed that anti-Semites were just trying to form and maintain a sense of community. This directly relates to the conflict between the French and Jewish identities; identity itself being an important concept in French culture.

⁴³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1948), 13.

⁴⁴ Enzo Traverso, "The Blindness of the Intellectuals: Historicizing Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew*." *October Magazine, Ltd. and Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT Press. Vol 87, Winter 1999, 73. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/779170>>).

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 75.

Within the Jewish community there was not much discussion of the Holocaust, save for a small group of survivors who created the Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation, also known as the CDJC.⁴⁶ The group was originally created during the war and made it their mission to collect and preserve Holocaust documents. In 1951, the CJDC published *Harvest of Hate: The Nazi Program for the Destruction of the Jews of Europe* by French author Leon Poliakov. Poliakov outlined the course of the Holocaust and how it evolved from German Nazi Anti-Semitism to the Final Solution of 1941.⁴⁷ He also discussed Jewish resistance, as well as the non-Jewish victims of the Holocaust. *Harvest of Hate* was a huge milestone in the postwar conversation because it was the first scholarly account of the Final Solution to be published in France.

The most surprising aspect of the French Jews' return to France was their lack of ambivalence towards their French identity. There was no blatant rejection of French identity in order to further embrace their Jewish identity. It was as if nothing changed identity wise. Rather, there was a strange feeling of being caught in an in between status. French Jews were not ready to look backwards on what happened, and they were not ready to look ahead to their future in the country. All they could do was focus on survival, as French people, in difficult economic and social times.

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The overall return to normalcy by the French Jews can be attributed to a few factors. The most important factor, which sets France apart from every other European country, was the size of their Jewish population after the war. Although approximately eighty thousand Jews were deported during the war, of which only three percent returned, that was only one-third of the Jewish population. While that seems like a large percentage of the population, and it was a devastating loss of life, it was nothing compared to the loss of the Jews in other countries. Between 1939 and 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators killed some 3.2 million of Poland's 3.5 million Jews.⁴⁸ Polish Jews were left with an infinitely smaller Jewish community, as opposed to French Jews who were returning to a Jewish population of 180,000.⁴⁹ This difference in numbers had a large effect on the returning Jewish population. French Jewish Holocaust survivors were welcomed back to a large, established, stable community. The community had been hurt, by both the loss of the life and the state sponsored discrimination they had lived under during Vichy rule, but it had survived. It had not been the goal of Vichy to deport French Jews. It is estimated that about thirty percent of the Jews who were deported from France were French (born in France to French parents, naturalized, or born in France to foreign parents).⁵⁰ However, children born in France to foreign parents were often considered foreign themselves, and were ordered to be deported along

⁴⁸ Konrad Kwiet and Jurgen Matthaus, *Contemporary Responses to the Holocaust* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 258.

⁴⁹ Wyman, 15.

⁵⁰ Berenbaum and Peck, 493.

with their parents. When those children were then identified as foreign, it is estimated that twenty percent of the Jews deported from France were French, and the other eighty percent “foreign”.⁵¹ These numbers reveal that the majority of French Jews were not deported during the war. They may have gone into hiding, but they remained in France. For the Vichy government, which contained many anti-Semitic leaders, French identity trumped Jewish identity, and their goal was not to target French Jews. While this may have caused tension between French Jews and non-French Jews, it gave the French Jews reason to believe their country cared about them. This is evidence of the long and deeply conflicted relationship that France has had toward its Jewish population.

The final factor to take into consideration when examining the state of the Jews in postwar France is the role of trauma. When dealing with the Holocaust, trauma seems to be the most important aspect of the postwar period. It was the trauma of the Occupation that caused the French people to turn a blind eye to the plight of the Jews and the role that the French government and people played in their demise. And it was the traumatic events of the Holocaust that caused French Jews to close themselves off to the realities that came with the postwar experience. Even if members of the French Jewish community had not been deported, the mere knowledge of the Final Solution was distressing in itself. The first ten years after the war was insufficient time to process the tragedies that had occurred. It was not until later that the

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French people were able to come to terms with their past.

The French Jews were able to distract themselves from the problems that arose in the postwar period with the arrival of the Algerian Jews in the late 1950's, while France turned its attention to other problems, such as their wars in Indochina and then Algeria. It was only in the 1970's that the Gaullist myth began to crack. Documents and information that had been suppressed for decades were released. An environment of obsession to discover the truth emerged in France. Nothing inspired a greater desire for knowledge than the trial of war criminal Klaus Barbie in 1983. SS Captain Klaus Barbie was the head of the Lyon security police from 1942 to 1944. Nearly forty years after the war had ended, Barbie was finally brought back to France to stand trial for crimes against humanity. The trial was symbolic because it showed a willingness on the part of the French government to come to terms with the atrocities that occurred in France during the war. It gave the people of France a reason to question what had happened, and slowly the truth started to flow. The trial also showed the importance collective memory played in postwar France. The trial gave France a chance to "restore reality to what had become a myth."⁵²

The place of Jews in France is something that has been redefined throughout their history. France's national identity makes it difficult for outsiders to be accepted, but once a foreigner obtains French citizenship, then nothing else matters. The French identity

⁵² Rousso, 213.

is complex and nothing is a greater testament to that than the actions of the French Jews after World War II. The only way the French Jews were able to remain in France and live with what happened was because they put their French identity first, in turn proving how French they truly were.

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Contaminating Civil Rights: Revitalizing the Pathologization of African Americans in Post World War II America

Christina Forst

In the 2008 presidential election, America saw a rarity: a serious African-American contender. Because of his race, the candidacy of Barack Obama caused some to feel uneasy, to the point where security detail was increased around Obama during his campaign stops. As much as Americans would like to pretend the race issue does not exist, the most recent presidential election proved that race has not been entirely removed from the nation's consciousness. It has been nearly fifty years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed freedom from discrimination based on race. However, a variety of factors has contributed to the tenacity of racism in the United States, including the pathologization of African Americans. It played a key role that is too frequently overlooked in favor of economic factors and cultural practices¹.

Some of the American public recognized the racial ironies and contradictions created by World War II but it would not be until 1954 that *Brown v. Board of Education* would ignite the Civil Rights movement. At its core, this movement threatened the comfort of very

¹ See Sundiata Cha-Jua, "The New Nadir: The Contemporary Black Racial Formation," *Black Scholar* 40, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 38-58 and Larry D. Singells, "The Socio-Economic Causes of the Recent Urban Disorders: Some Empirical Evidence," *Land Economics* 47, no. 3 (August 1971).

traditional white American society, which was enjoying post war prosperity. Suddenly, that society was plummeted into discussions of race that many believed were threatening the social order. In order to combat this unsettling trend, the old idea of African Americans as inherently diseased or psychologically abnormal was revitalized. Unwilling to acknowledge any wrongdoing, white Americans reinvigorated the pathologization of African Americans. The idea that African Americans were inherently diseased and abnormal, the colloquial definition of pathologization, presented the solution to the problem of Black Civil Rights. If the African American race as a whole was diseased and mentally unsound, it therefore could not be trusted with equality and the right to make important decisions regarding the fate of the country. This scientific racism allowed anti-Civil Rights groups to allege that their racist philosophies were based in science and therefore devoid of any personal prejudice.

The pathologization of African Americans has been the subject of considerable scholarly study. In *Medical Apartheid* (2006), Harriet Washington delineates the exact medical experiments that were performed in order to make the case that African Americans were inherently inferior. Jonathan Metzel, in *The Protest Psychosis* (2010) reveals how mental illness was diagnosed in order to undermine the legitimacy of the Civil Rights movement. This paper demonstrates how the pathologization of the Black race negated the nominal racial progress achieved during World War II and undermined the social progress in the immediate postwar period. Although the military community was willing, or more accurately forced, to blur color lines following the war, white American society was not

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prepared to give African Americans full rights. The theme of the diseased African American (the pathologization of African Americans) continued to undermine social progress in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and beyond.

This pathologization began with slavery. Plantation owners maintained that slavery was a positive good for all concerned, for slaves as well as masters. Blacks were too diseased to function independently, they could not take care of themselves, and their food and shelter was provided for them. Running away, some concluded, was therefore evidence of a different kind of disease, "a disease of the mind," specifically, "mental alienation...more curable" than others "as a general rule."² Slavery provided a means of containing these diseased individuals. This pathologization asserted that slaves were running away and causing trouble because they were not aware of what they were doing. They were not abandoning the opportunities given to them because of a natural desire for freedom but rather due to their "stupidness of mind and insensibility."³ Turning towards science gave owners of slaves an acceptable basis for their racism. If science, the ultimate rational approach, could find reasons for enslaving African Americans and could also explain away all forms of slave resistance, then what slave owners were doing was not wrong, but entirely justified.

² Cartwright, "Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race," *Africans in America*, 1967, <<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3106t.html>> (15 Feb. 2011).

³ Ibid.

It had to be established that “Negroes and Whites were separate species.”⁴ The sizes of head and skull shapes, and other physical differences, were explored within the scientific community. Conclusions were drawn, via questionable techniques, that determined that whites and African Americans were physically different and therefore constituted entirely different species.⁵ As the dominant species, white slave owners were simply doing their natural duty to help those of the inferior African American race. This civilizing mission is a common theme throughout American racial history as “science played an important role in establishing the ‘fact’ that savages were racially inferior to members of civilized society.”⁶ Medical statistics supported these theories. The black community was riddled with diseases like tuberculosis, reinforcing claims that the race was inherently diseased. “White supremacists used [tuberculosis] as an argument for the interiority of the black race and maintained that in a matter of time the disease-ridden ‘Negro’ would lose the struggle for survival and become extinct.”⁷ African Americans no longer were presented as at greater risk for certain diseases but as doomed by them.

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Once the Civil War was over, whites were no longer able to keep Blacks down through slavery. They needed to enhance previous rationales of inferiority. The American eugenics movement began to take hold starting as early as 1907. In a line of thinking that would eventually inspire Hitler and contribute to the Nazis' extermination of the Jews during World War II, the American eugenics movement believed that anyone deemed unfit, usually by racial standards, should be medically prevented from reproducing. It was the medical white man's burden: in order to prevent humankind from deteriorating, he had to artificially control the gene pool.⁸ It was protecting that which was good, the white race, from the germs and diseases inherent in the African race. It was seen as a war against those who would not survive anyway, those who were genetically as well as socially weak.⁹ The Jim Crow South provided the legal excuse for segregation. As a series of laws that spanned the local and federal level, Jim Crow created a "restrictive, punitive system of widespread segregation".¹⁰ Segregation was sanctioned and upheld consistently: but the medical community during this time did not have as much influence because segregation was upheld as a legal standard. However, when war broke out in Europe in

⁸ Oren Harman, "On The Power Of Ideas." *Minerva: A Review of Science, Learning & Policy* 45, no. 2 (April 2007): America: History and Life with Full Text, EBSCOhost, 176.

⁹ Edwin Black, *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003).

¹⁰ Catherine M. Lewis and J. Richard Lewis, eds., *Jim Crow America: A Documentary History* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), 43.

1939 and America subsequently entered into World War II, the securities of institutionalized segregation seemed to be eroding. Others, who rejected the theories of eugenics, hoped that the contributions of African Americans would make huge strides in eradicating racism.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, there was a national sentiment of revenge and patriotic duty. The United States was now an active participant in the war in Europe and in Asia and all citizens were expected to fulfill their obligations. African Americans answered the call of duty but once they began to fill the ranks, they began to face something with which they were intimately familiar in civilian life - segregation. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Selective Service Act in 1940 preventing the two races from uniting in combat battalions. Roosevelt believed that racial integration would be impractical, and distracting to the job at hand.¹¹ The initial idea held by many African Americans during World War II that racially integrated units would "bomb the color line" was thus not realized.¹² While the famous example of the Tuskegee airmen is upheld as the story of African American men's contributions to the war, the unit remained segregated. Moreover, most African American servicemen were relegated to positions deemed appropriate to an inferior status, such as cooks and busboys.

On the home front, results of the pathologization of African Americans was going unnoticed. Perhaps the

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most egregious example is the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment. While the Tuskegee airmen were flying high in the hopes of challenging the racist ideal, syphilis was being studied in Black men. The clinical “trial” involved infecting men with the disease but leaving them untreated so that the disease’s symptoms could be tracked. These experiments were never performed on white men. Often, the consent for these experiments was gained through deceit. Clearly, although World War II was seen as a victory for the United States, African Americans did not reap the full benefits of their participation. The ultimate irony was the criticism leveled by American prosecutors during the Nuremberg Trials. Prosecutors called Nazi physicians who performed experiments on humans criminals deserving of the death penalty, while the American Medical Association stood by and let the Tuskegee syphilis experiments continue.¹³ In the mainstream medical community, the belief that African Americans harbored disease prevailed.

Although institutionalized racism continued in the United States, American troops had experienced an entirely different world overseas. They came into contact with new cultures and found that racism was not inherent in all societies. Also, the Nazi death camps revealed the consequences of racism taken to the extreme. African American troops hoped that their victory in Europe would mean victory over segregation at home. This expectation threatened the comfort of

¹³ Malcom Mills, “Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present,” *Journal of American History* 94, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 102.

white society, eager to enjoy peace and post-war prosperity.

Nine years after the war ended, the 1954 *Brown v. Board* ruling challenged the American status quo significantly. The southern way of life was being threatened by ivory tower intellectuals. Those who needed to defend their way of life needed a rationale equally based on intellect rather than emotion. Because America is a country that is based on scientific thought and largely secular legislation, those wanting to prevent the advancement of African Americans turned to science to support their assertions of natural white supremacy. "Scientific arguments could be persuasive in the public forum," writes John P. Jackson, "because 'science' had, and has, a unique cultural authority in American society."¹⁴

The threat of racial integration was gaining traction in American society. In response, Stuart Omer Landry published *The Cult of Equality*, a book seeking to stem the rising tide of "equalitarians." Landry emphasized the sexual promiscuity of African Americans and their resultant high rates of syphilis.¹⁵ Landry argued that this immoral disease, coupled with illegitimate birth rates, proved that the black race was incapable of surviving on its own. He also cited many other symptoms of Blacks' medical inferiority, such as "superstition" and the "lack of sense of time."¹⁶ Landry was countering the Civil Rights Movement charge that all

individuals are equal. Ironically, he accused the equalitarian movement of perverting “science to their equality ends.”¹⁷ Landry’s work was largely overlooked. However, this in itself would prove to be somewhat beneficial for their agenda. Landry and his supporters argued that equalitarians wanted society to ignore his book so that the fallacies of their own assertions would not be exposed. This sense of conspiracy would carry through to the *Brown v. Board* case, providing an early resource for segregationists.

White segregationists were concerned for their own race. Some among them viewed African Americans as an entirely different species and held that the recent integration “can result only in a parasitic deterioration of white culture....”¹⁸ Frantic to preserve what they were determined to consider the master race, segregationists insisted that the chemistry of the black body was entirely different than that of the white body. The former had an increased predisposition to disease, as described by the Governor of Alabama’s 1965 report entitled “The Biology of the Race Problem.” Governor George Wallace believed in the superior quality of the white gene pool and made his statements unapologetically. Integration contaminated that gene pool, something that was incredibly offensive to him. Even the recognition that there were healthy, intelligent Blacks did not cause Wallace to adjust his argument because, after all, “a few intelligent Negroes do not

¹⁷ John P. Jackson, *Science for Segregation: Race, Law, and the Case against Brown v. Board of Education* (Critical America) (New York: NYU Press, 2005): 70.

¹⁸ Carleton Putnam, *Race and Reason: A Yankee View* (Washington D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961) <<http://wpww-thefolk.com/literature/raceandreason.pdf>>.

make a race.”¹⁹ The systematic approach to utterly discredit African Americans had begun in earnest.

First to be scrutinized was intelligence. African Americans wanted to gain their Civil Rights on the grounds that they were perfectly capable and of sound mind. If science could prove that African Americans were less intelligent than their white counterparts, then the inferiority argument would be on solid ground. Since races with smaller-brains were deemed to be “almost wholly incapable of progress, even under the guidance of higher races,”²⁰ extensive research began to set out to prove the differences in the structure of white and black brains. These alleged differences would provide the foundation for later medical racism. It was determined that a white individual’s brain was heavier than the brain of an African American. Blacks were also declared to be lacking certain formative processes as well possessing frontal lobe differences (the portion of the brain that controls behavior).²¹ This research undermined the credibility of those pushing for civil rights in America, since it held that African Americans could not handle the responsibilities that come with equal rights; their brains were simply not capable of sufficiently sophisticated understanding. This created a kind of victimolo-

gy allegation widely shared among the medical community. Proving that African Americans were not as intelligent called for a reinvigorating of the white man's burden. Since this race could not take care of itself, its members needed to be provided and cared for, as wards of the state.

Although the direct link between smaller brains and psychosis was not elaborated in medical studies, the spike in institutionalizing African American psychological patients provides proof of a societal connection. The grounds for committing these individuals were hazy. Circumstances surrounding the insanity diagnosis were ignored, causing many misdiagnoses: "If the clinician fails to take into account the special environmental circumstances, he will misjudge normal behavior as pathological. He may label realistic anger as neurotic hostility."²² But in treatment and care, patients were racially divided. Those committed to white asylums had access to exercise, easy work details, and leisure time. Black asylums were characterized by "hard physical labor and custodial care," which did not benefit the individuals' mental state.²³ While white mental patients were believed to have some hope of treatment, African Americans were generally seen as beyond help and suitable only for physical labor. Stereotyped as bodies without feelings,

²² Alexander Thomas and Samuel Sillen, *Racism and Psychiatry*. (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991). In Vanessa Jackson. "Separate but Unequal: The Legacy of Racially Segregated Psychiatric Hospital." Pat Deegan and CommonGround.

<http://www.patdeegan.com/sites/default/files/files/separate_and_unequal.pdf>, 8.

²³ Ibid, 13.

many suffered abuses at the hands of those entrusted with their care. Sandy Stewart provided a first hand account of her time spent in Central State Hospital. She recalls rapes of women by male staff and chillingly remembers staff choking patients with wet towels.²⁴ These atrocities, combined with the fact that the medical staff was often all white, meant there was no hope for African American patients to receive proper psychological care. Because their psychosis was deemed inherent, they were rented out as day laborers and did menial work for their hospital. This trend of increasing psychosis diagnoses among African Americans was also meant to undermine the Civil Rights Movement. Not only did it seem to prove that Black Americans were biologically inferior, it indicated that they were also more predisposed to harbor diseases that limited their mental capacity.

In 1969, the editors of *Institutional Racism in America* provocatively called the American healthcare system overtly racist. Black mortality rates were higher than those of whites, a significant 6.5 years.²⁵ The study concluded that advances in medical technology were not benefiting African Americans. The lack of black physicians was also called into question. With-

out any representation by their peers, the interests of African Americans would not be championed in the medical community. White Americans were healthier not due to inherent superiority but due to the “combination of historical tradition, lack of federal willingness to aggressively document compliance to federal law, and local willingness to operate [segregated] hospitals” which resulted in the racist leaning of hospital services.²⁶

The effort to disenfranchise the African American community while simultaneously preserving the integrity of the white race was one entrenched and hard to combat. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the only legislation that could upset the status quo. The passing of this act made racism officially taboo. However, this did not mean that it dissipated. The pathologization of African Americans simply went underground after 1964. In the 1970s, adherents found their leader in William Shockley, a Nobel laureate and strict segregationist. Shockley called into question the factual basis of the integration ideals. He championed eugenics as a means of preventing the unfit from procreating. Shockley seemed to thrive on the controversy his research created which benefited segregationists since the publicity got their message to the public. Arthur Jensen would follow Shockley; Jensen’s research was largely based on IQ difference and he claimed that the difference in these scores was “genetic in nature and impervious to environmental

²⁶ Ibid, 111.

modification.”²⁷ The last of these theories floated by segregationists was less based on science and more cultural in nature. They claimed that Europeans, and later Americans, were able to extract themselves from the bonds of poverty or tyranny entirely on their own. African Americans, they argued, had to rely on others for their liberation. According to segregationists, this was interfering with the natural order.²⁸ By the 1970s, the effort to prove medical racism was correct continued to diminish within the scientific community. No longer in the majority, the democratic process could not support those in favor of segregation and scientists investigated the role of bias in previous studies.

World War II provided unprecedented opportunities for African Americans. The call to arms led many to assume that their wartime experience of “all hands on deck” would translate into post-war civilian life. However, white American society was not ready to accept anything so drastic clinging to its familiar, albeit racist ways. Unable to justify these changes on social grounds - after all service member had worked for democracy - medical science became the rationale of choice for racism. White American society found its justification in opposing the Civil Rights movement. A race inherently diseased with such terrible afflictions could not be trusted to maintain its own rights, let alone be trusted with making decisions affecting the white majority: “the lower races broke into the modern world as mere ‘survivals’ from the past, mentally

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incapable of shouldering the burdens of complex civilization” and hastening this process would only serve to solve “the race problem.”²⁹

To some medical researchers, the Civil Rights movement was not a call for a merited liberation of Black Americans but only the rantings of diseased individuals that had to be suppressed. Although advances would be made by the Civil Rights movement, echos of the pathologization of African Americans remain today. It took the United States over two hundred years to elect a black president and even then, his credentials are called into question. A few in the medical community are still asserting the inferiority of African Americans. A 2003 study attempted to verify IQ differences between African American and White subjects. The author attempts to explain “race-difference science,” citing other current studies as evidence.³⁰ Race-based limitations on access to medicine and health care continue to affect African American detrimentally, even through equal access and treatment are supposedly assured.³¹ While movement towards a color-blind society continues, remnants of

²⁹ John S. Haller, *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859 - 1900*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), ix.

³⁰ Sean Thomas, “Are Whites Cleverer Than Blacks,” *The Spectator* (May 24, 2003).
<http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3724/is_200305/ai_n9238342/pg_5/?tag=content;coll> (accessed 28 February 28 2011).

³¹ Dai D., “Black Residential Segregation, Disparities in Spatial Access to Health Care Facilities, and Late-Stage Breast Cancer Diagnosis in Metropolitan Detroit,” *Health Place* (13 July 2010) <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20630792>> (accessed 9 March 2011).

pathologization survive. It must be eradicated in order to move American society forward into the next step in race relations.

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A Policy of Rock: How Rock and Roll Undermined the Communist Revolution in Cold War Russia

Neal Albright

“Capitalism was the engine of rock’s development as a global cultural phenomenon.”¹

Today, we know how the story of the Soviet Union ends. In 1921, however, at the end of four years of bitter civil war, the future seemed limitless, and Vladimir Lenin was prepared to take full advantage of it. Lenin’s ultimate goals went further than simple competent governance. His party, the Bolsheviks, “took power with an extraordinarily ambitious program aimed...at remaking humanity.”²

As the civil war wound down and Bolshevik victory appeared imminent, Lenin turned his attentions to catalyzing a Russian economic recovery in the wake of four tumultuous and destructive years. In line with his vision for a worldwide Socialist revolution, Lenin sought to modernize Russia into a twentieth century power. Observing the newly ascendent great power in the West, Lenin came to the conclusion that America’s success lay in its technological achievements, especially in its innovative uses of electricity. By co-opting the American focus on technological modernity, Lenin

¹ Thomas Cushman, *Notes from the Underground* (New York: Albany State University of New York Press 1995), 19.

² Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from Beginning to End* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 30.

believed that Russia could become an even greater power. As he famously asserted, "Communism = Soviet power + electrification."³

Moreover, modern industry and the electricity it relied on would also be crucial to achieving Lenin's predicted Communist apotheosis. In a 1920 speech, he declared that "...the organization of industry on the basis of modern, advanced technology, on electrification...will put an end to the division between town and country, will make it possible to raise the level of culture in the countryside and to overcome, even in the most remote corners of land, backwardness, ignorance, poverty, disease, and barbarism."⁴ Lenin stressed that "industry cannot be developed without electrification." Consequently, "without reconstruction of industry on lines of large-scale machine production, socialist construction will obviously remain only a set of decrees."⁵ Throughout its seventy years of existence, this theme of technological and industrial modernity remained central not only to the USSR's national goals, but also to its core ideology.

Lenin died in 1924 predicting a coming global Socialist revolution, with urban industrialization and technological prowess as its catalysts. Perhaps he foresaw automobiles replacing horses for personal transport, nuclear weapons threatening the very existence of humanity, or communication technology connecting the planet on an unprecedented scale. However, it is unlikely that the brilliant Socialist could

augur the circumstances wherein, thirty years later and across the world in the United States, a generation of young musicians would plug electricity into guitars and subsequently popularize a new form of music that would in turn emigrate throughout the world, including into Lenin's oft-purged Soviet Union. He could not know that this music would then collectivize societal discontent and contribute to the eventual fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The grand Communist apotheosis, achievable only with technological modernity, would be undone, in part, by the technology that enabled the loud, electric musical stylings of dissatisfied, bored, and rock and roll-obsessed kids.

In the twenty years since the dissolution of the USSR and end of the Cold War, an array of both Soviet and American scholars have studied the effects of Western rock and roll music on Soviet government policy and on the daily lives of Soviet citizens. These scholars generally agree that rock and roll music held a significant role in both improving the standing of America and the West in the minds of Soviet citizens while also distracting from and undermining Communist ideology. Furthermore, a broad consensus emerges throughout Soviet rock studies that the popularity of Western culture contributed to a cultural rebellion that, by its inherent nature, was at odds with Soviet policy and ideology.

Scholars disagree about the exact nature of this revolt. Thomas Cushman argues that rock music created a Russian counterculture which actively protested against Soviet policies, akin to the American counterculture of the 1960s. In contrast, Alexei Yurchak writes that rock and roll merely created a political apathy among the youth, resulting in an

active disinterest and withdrawal from Communism and its tenets. In a country founded predominantly upon the ideal of a citizenry united in solidarity within Socialism, such a profound disconnect would therefore be fatal to the authority of the State's social contract between citizen and government.

This paper argues that the concept of technological modernity was central to Soviet Communist ideology and intertwined with the rock and roll explosion of the latter half of the 20th century. In interesting and ironic ways, serving to undermine its own legitimacy, the Soviet government inadvertently instigated and perpetuated rock and roll awareness, and its harsh reflection on Soviet society. By seeking to contain the ideological power of rock and roll, the regime implicitly acknowledged the techno-superiority of the West. In the end, rock and roll and its related technologies confirmed what most Soviets already suspected: the West had won the war of technological modernity.⁶

1957-1964: Krushchev, De-Stalinization, and a Single Voice

Blank tape was hard to find, but the stores had plenty of tapes with old Revolutionary anthems in stock...on my tapes you could hear bursts of the Red Army Choir between the sides of Sticky Fingers.⁷

Magnitizdat

In 1953, Joseph Stalin suffered a stroke and soon after died. Hundreds of thousands packed Moscow's public areas, jostling for the chance to view his displayed corpse. Stalin had institutionalized a state system whose key tenets included mass murder, forced collectivization, and omnipresent secret police. It was also the only life many Soviet people had ever known, and Stalin's death evoked a deep and uncertain anxiety about the future.⁸

Nikita Khrushchev emerged victorious amid the chaotic power struggle to succeed the dictator. Khrushchev became what Soviet historian Peter Kenez described as, "the last Soviet leader with a firm belief in the superiority of the Marxist-Leninist ideology" and "a fervent Communist...[who] never doubted the justice of the cause." Khrushchev instituted a series of reforms toward this end - including the period of de-Stalinization. Notably, Khrushchev denounced the "cult of personality," the concept of idolizing a political figure in the popular imagination in order to obfuscate controversial (and usually brutal) policies. Under Khrushchev's watch, Soviet Russia charted a more moderate (though still repressive) path.

One effect of de-Stalinization was a resulting "cultural thaw." By the mid-1950s, "many of the old [artistic] restrictions were lifted, and every component of Soviet culture benefited." Kenez asserts that the new society allowed Soviet intellectuals to "distinguish between friends and foes of change." As a result, "from this time on...the Soviet Union ceased to be a totalitarian society."⁹ Still, officially published and distributed

⁸ Kenez, 185.

⁹ Ibid, 191.

works were subject to government approval, and media were always subject to the political whims of the State.¹⁰

In an effort to showcase its post-Stalinist societal transformation, the Kremlin hosted in 1957 the Moscow Youth Festival. The State gathered tens of thousands of teenagers from across the USSR and invited musical acts from both sides of the Iron Curtain to perform, including groups from Great Britain. The British groups brought an array of unorthodox instruments, including electric guitars. What they did with them horrified the older generation in attendance, but “the rock and roll numbers aroused great interest among the youth of the socialist camp.”¹¹ This was not to be an isolated event but a vanguard of not only a new era of popular electrified music, but a new era of how the populace interacted with its government, and each other.

By the end of the 1950s and into the 1960s, public demand for Western rock and roll music had spread. Most of the music was illegal and not available for purchase from official commercial venues. The youth acquired the forbidden tunes anyway, mainly through the emergence of domestic electrical technology that allowed rock and roll music to be pirated and distributed ubiquitously throughout the USSR. This distribution of Western culture was itself illegal and thus an act of protest, and the issue gained traction when underground Soviet musicians began writing their own songs using Russian lyrics and distributing that on

the same networks, creating a collective acknowledgement of status quo discontent. First on discarded x-ray plates that doubled as second-hand 'vinyl' records (known as "records on ribs"¹²), and then on tape recorders, this distribution was primarily possible through *magnitizdat*; literally "tape-recorder culture."

The concept of *magnitizdat* illustrates beautifully the democratizing effect that technology had upon the Soviet masses. Specifically, the release of State-manufactured tape recorders starting in 1960 had hugely significant and unintended consequences on the nature of public communication. The machines allowed the population to spread music and thus ideas that were not officially sanctioned by the state censors. The 128,000 recorders that appeared on the market in 1960 sold out quickly, and by the end of the decade, sales numbered more than a million units per year.¹³ Party leaders and ideological censors seemed to have no conception of the potential impact of the devices, or how they would be used.

As de-Stalinization continued into the late 1950s and early 1960s, social criticism gained in both popularity and government acceptance. Comedy clubs featured acts satirizing the hubris of the contemporary Soviet state, while young singer-songwriters performed protest songs for groups of friends in private areas. A prominent Eastern German musician, Wolf Biermann, achieved exceptional notoriety with his sparse guitar playing, catchy melodies and pointed, political lyrics. Among others, artists such as Vladimir Vysotsky and

¹² Artemy Troitsky, *Back in the USSR* (London: Omnibus Press, 1987), 19.

¹³ Ryback, 37.

Bulat Okudzhava also found success with similar songs. Collectively, these musicians and the others like them became known as the Bards of Discontent.¹⁴

Bulat Okudzhava had direct experience with the terrorism of the Stalin era. Though serving no time in labor camps himself, “his father had been ‘liquidated’ by Stalin in 1937 and his mother banished to Siberia.”¹⁵ After Stalin’s death, many political prisoners had remained incarcerated for years, until by 1956 it was “impossible to keep most political prisoners in the camps any longer.” The Soviet population surely noticed “the return of so many of Stalin’s victims,” making “the Stalinist horrors visible to all.”¹⁶ Perhaps this prisoner return influenced Bulat Okudzhava to write and eventually become the first hero of the *magnitizdat*.

Mr. Okudzhava began composing in the mid-1950s, performing songs in his apartment for the enjoyment of friends. At some point in the early sixties, an audience member with a Soviet-made tape recorder captured a typical performance, which included references to love as well as criticism of the Stalinist years, two taboo subjects. Almost overnight, two things exploded in popularity: Bulat Okudzhava, and the concept of trading in underground music. No longer “was the music of the bards restricted to small groups of ten or twenty people who gathered in private apartments. Tapes with underground songs soon circulated by the millions.”¹⁷

Though the controversial subject matter of Okudzhava's songs surely drew interest in his material, it may have been the very concept of sharing officially unapproved ideas in a conspiratorial manner that appealed to the population. Vladimir Frumkin, a musician who graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory of Music, describes the impact of Okudzhava as larger than its content. Frumkin summarizes the situation:

"Before Okudzhava, the Soviet song industry had virtually no competition from within the country. The state monopoly on songs seemed unshakeable. Suddenly it was discovered that one person could compose a song and make it famous, without the Union of Soviet Composers, with its creative sections and department of propaganda, without help of popular singers, choirs and orchestras, without publishing houses, radio and television, film and record companies, editors and censors."¹⁸

Okudzhava proved that one person, with the right message and the right means of spreading that message, could profoundly impact the society in which he or she lived. This smacked of individuality in the rigidly collectivist USSR, and revealed that official censorship could be undermined on a mass scale.

Magnitizdat listeners experienced more than music on their pirated tapes. On a typical recording, "one heard...the presence of the audience: chairs scraping across the floor, a bottle knocking against glasses,

¹⁸ Ryback, 45.

muted laughter or quiet applause.” Taken together with the music and the illicit distribution methods, and “legends emerged, faceless legends, recognizable only by their voices, their music, and their lyrics.”¹⁹ As Khrushchev called on the government to end the “cult of personality” of political leaders, his population was very much doing so on their own, forming an appreciation of their own heroes based solely on musical message. Solidarity stemmed from the recorded, audible evidence that across the country, other groups of people were doing the exact same thing.

The *magnitizdat* acted like the Guttenberg printing press, but better. Though Guttenberg’s machine brought the written word to the poor masses, those masses were still constrained by rampant illiteracy. Everyone in the Soviet Union, however, had ears. Whether Western rock music or songs from the Bards, the Soviet-produced home tape recorders allowed nearly anybody to pirate a song, re-distribute it, and be exposed to the messages contained within. Music was an ideal vehicle to spread non-Party approved messages, because of the technological distribution advantages of the time and context.

As outlined in Marx’s theory on the means of production, the State owned the physical machinery necessary to produce large amounts of cultural output, which it could in turn use to propagate ideology. It possessed such tools of cultural production in the realms of cinema, literature, and official music. The State officially owned the labor as well; in the field of music, only those people who had studied at official conservatory levels were approved to produce music,

and only then under the strict boundaries of taste dictated by the censors. With these appropriations, the State felt it could dictate proper popular culture, and thus control the entertainment arena's impact upon ideology.

The phenomenon of *magnitizdat* proved that concept a fallacy. The public produced and listened to the music it wanted to hear, despite and because of the poor sound quality and illegal methods of acquirement. As the classically-trained musician Vladimir Frumkin asserts above, the government controlled the officially trained writers, producers, editors, and necessary equipment to produce top quality music.²⁰ But people preferred the grainy tape recordings because content matters. Bulat Okudzhava, Vladimir Vysotsky, Wolf Biermann and others sang about the daily hardships of Soviet life, which resonated in a way that the officially sanctioned, government-produced music could not.

Radio

"An emphasis on technical progress and technical-scientific education was a main theme of Communist Party propaganda since the first days of Soviet history ..."²¹

Nearly all Western rock and roll music was imported illegally into the Soviet Union. Some records came with visiting Western students, or were brought

²⁰ Cushman, 40.

²¹ Sergei I. Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 32.

back by the very small number of Soviet citizens that were allowed to travel abroad. However, a significant amount of this music was imported from Western radio stations.

Soon after the Cold War began, the United States established radio stations in West Germany with the explicit purpose of broadcasting information and entertainment into the USSR. The station, Radio Liberty, broadcast in Russian.²² Interestingly, the West piggybacked on a technological innovation of the Soviet Union. Soviet radio carried the unique distinction of being broadcast almost entirely in shortwave frequency, as opposed to the “medium wave (AM) or FM broadcasts” that did not carry well over long distances. Yale Richmond writes in *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War* that the Russians themselves “pioneered short-wave when Lenin used it in 1922 to address listeners in the far corners of Russia.” Consequently, “Soviet-produced radios, even inexpensive ones, had shortwave bands.”²³ The West then took advantage of these shortwave capabilities to broadcast their own content. In response, the Soviet government “built a vast network of jammers...which made listening difficult.” Despite these efforts, Richmond could pick up Western broadcasts even in the middle of Moscow, where he spent “a tour of duty” from 1967-69. As he puts it, “if a listener had a decent radio, knew something about antennas, and was determined to learn

what was being said in the West, it was indeed possible to hear Western broadcasts despite the jamming.”²⁴

Like Voice of America, Western programs from the BBC, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and Radio Luxembourg contained similar content and were likewise available to many Soviets, especially those in the Eastern European bloc. In a country philosophically isolated by the Iron Curtain and physically isolated by such barriers as the Berlin Wall and intense travel restrictions, radio technology transcended not only geography, but ideology as well. Radio broke “the Soviet information monopoly” and allowed “listeners to hear news and views that differed from those of the Communist media.”²⁵ Many Soviet youth tuned into the Voice of America program for rock and roll music, and stayed for Western news analysis.

Soviet Government pushed technological modernity not only in its ideology, but in its education as well. An “emphasis on technical progress and technical-scientific education was a main theme of Communist Party propaganda since the first days of Soviet history,” resulting in “unforeseen results among Soviet youth.” In the late 1950s and early 1960s, thousands of high-school and college students designed and built their own radio devices, with some students even broadcasting their own radio shows.²⁶ The primary purpose of these home-made gadgets was to acquire and retransmit Western music. Three college students arrested and interrogated by the KGB in 1960 confessed that

²⁴ Richmond, 185.

²⁵ Richmond, 184.

²⁶ Zhuk, 32.

they recorded the popular music of capitalist countries from the radio (presumably using State-manufactured tape recorders!) and then re-broadcast them to local audiences. According to the KGB report, “these students not only listened to the Western radio stations but also spread ‘anti-Soviet information’ among their classmates.”²⁷ Undoubtably, these students acquired the technical skills required to build relatively advanced electronic devices because of the obsessive focus in Soviet education on science and technology.

What was the appeal of Western music to the Soviets? Memoirist David Gurevich describes growing up in the Soviet Union and listening to rock music with his friends on the “numerous radio stations like Radio Luxembourg or the BBC” because “it was more than a breath of fresh air - it was a hurricane, a release, a true voice of freedom.” Gurevich recalls a friend from school named Sergei, who “seemed to have no life outside his legendary tape collection.” Noting the meticulous arrangement of the collection, Gurevich asks rhetorically “How much of it was an obsession with music? With its message? Was the inaccessibility of records and other rockabilia related to, perhaps, some other emptiness in his life?”²⁸ The same question could be asked about many Soviet youth of the era.

Like the ubiquity of the *magnitizdat*, the enormous popularity of Western radio in the Soviet Union came from two factors: natural curiosity about the forbidden West, and the relatively easy access to information that radio provided. Rock music was the ideal vehicle to spread forbidden information because - as with the

magnitizdat - one did not require expensive and illegal cultural production equipment; just a radio. As Gurevich notes, “you needed...some command of English and the proper connections, to get a hold of and read 1984. You needed friends in high places to see *Midnight Cowboy*. But rock was readily available from the numerous radio stations.”²⁹

The ideological effects of Western rock and roll music cannot be overstated. Yale Richmond, the diplomat, reproduces an email he received from Serge Levin, a Russian native who grew up in the 60s and 70s. Levin credits rock and roll as the “main factor that brought down the Communist regime,” explaining that

It was the cultural dynamite that blew up the Iron Curtain. People were bringing Western records from abroad, and they could be bought on the black market...young people duplicated those records like crazy. And I’m telling you, the smell of freedom radiated by that music had a profound impact on myself and thousands, maybe millions of young people in my country. Very few knew what the songs were about in terms of lyrics, but everyone could feel the energy and was able to figure it out by themselves. So the music was the main factor in “Westernization” of the Russian people, at least in my generation.³⁰

²⁹ Gurevich, 127.

³⁰ Richmond, 206.

David Gurevich, for his part, did understand the lyrics, and describes the effect that Bob Dylan (notable for his unorthodox, nasally singing voice) had upon his psyche. He recalls that he “would not accept for one moment that you needed to be a musical genius in order to stand up to the powers that be, to people who think that their money or nationality or breeding or just plain connections give them the right to look down on you.”³¹

The 1970s: Brezhnev, VIA, and Time Machine

So now you consider us a bourgeois sell-out...musicians, including rockers, need to work professionally...professionalism is the ability to achieve one's desired results.

– Andrei Makarevich³²

Vokal'no-instrumental'nyi ansambl'

Tired of his mercurial mood swings and unpredictable reform attempts, the party elites turned on Khrushchev in 1964, and the political veteran Leonid Brezhnev eventually came to replace him as the chief authority in the Soviet Union. By the end of the 18-year Brezhnev period, culminating with his death in 1982, Brezhnev and his administration were regarded both domestically and internationally as aging and out of touch with the modern world.³³

Brezhnev's rule is characterized by economic stagnation resulting from the difficulties of a central planning approach toward an increasingly complicated national economy, political corruption, and the end of the utopian promise of Communism. The administration publicized Brezhnev's tenure as "real, existing socialism," because, as Peter Kenez argues, "the new leaders felt uncomfortable with a utopian ideology, unconsciously realizing that the promise of a just and affluent society in the distant future had outlived its usefulness: people were tired of waiting." Thus, the Brezhnev "era was one of complacency and conservatism."³⁴

These adjectives stood in sharp contrast from the grandiose promises of Khrushchev and even Stalin concerning the development of high technology. Since its inception, the Soviet Union had consistently guaranteed its citizens a quality of life to eventually exceed that of the West. As late as the Khrushchev era, Soviet officials continued to insist that the technological gap between Russia and the West was closing rapidly, as evidenced by the 1959 launching of Sputnik satellite (and the production of domestic technology, like tape recorders). Yet, by the time of Brezhnev, "Soviet citizens believed that absolutely everything made in the West was superior to its domestic products" and that "even simple Soviet citizens who fully accepted the existing social and political order knew well that people in the West enjoyed a much higher standard of living."³⁵ Though complacent and conservative, the government did not openly acknowledge any techno-

³⁴ Kenez, 216.

³⁵ Kenez, 223.

logical gap between the societies, and increased its attention toward controlling the ideological influences that the Soviet population had access to. This including reigning in increasingly popular home-grown (and illegal) Soviet rock bands.

These bands were formed in the mold of popular Western groups. The Beatles gained massive popularity in 1964, and by 1966 over 250 rock bands had formed in Moscow alone.³⁶ Reacting to the lack of access to quality musical equipment, rock musicians typically assembled their own equipment and sound systems with whatever equipment they could find,³⁷ including components from public pay-phones that they could use to convert acoustic guitars into electric ones.³⁸ Highly desired Western instruments were available on the black market, albeit at exorbitantly expensive prices; most rock bands could not afford such equipment. Nevertheless, even with homemade gear, the bands drew devoted followers.

In the late 1960s, the State took a new approach in its attempts to counter the ideological difficulties posed by the popularity of rock and roll. In 1966 “the Ministry of Culture approved the formation of the first state-supported beat-music ensembles,” entitled Vocal Instrument Ensembles, or VIA’s.³⁹ Cushman describes the relationship as a Faustian bargain: “musicians agreed to temper the content of their music - *first and foremost the lyrical content* - in return for access to the means of cultural production and reproduction...and

money.”⁴⁰ Artemy Troitsky describes VIA music as “a disciplined (or, to be frank, castrated) version of beat music.”⁴¹

The VIA held two concurrent purposes: to drain the ideological challenge of rock and roll by co-opting the musical form to propagate pro-Soviet ideology. In many cases, songs were written by the Union of Soviet Composers. Common topics included “steel production, grain harvests, and antifascist solidarity. One popular song...was dedicated to the trans-Siberian pipeline.”⁴²

Why would underground rock bands compromise their independent voice, which seems so at odds with the original draw of rock and roll in the first place? On one hand, some “amateur bands...had little need or desire for official recognition...young people’s insatiable hunger for live Western rock guaranteed full houses; foreign radio broadcasts and black-market recordings invigorated repertoires with fresh material from the West.”⁴³ On the other, good equipment was expensive, and “amateur status meant you had to hold a regular job and could only play in your spare time.”⁴⁴ Furthermore, “using worn out home-made equipment and low quality instruments was both unaesthetic and uncool. But Western equipment...was only available on the black market...A Fender or Gibson electric guitar went for three to five thousand roubles.”⁴⁵ State sponsorship allowed musicians access to superior

⁴⁰ Cushman, 80 (emphasis mine).

⁴¹ Troitsky, 28.

⁴² Ryback, 151.

⁴³ Ryback, 153.

⁴⁴ Ryback, 152.

⁴⁵ Troitsky, 43.

Western equipment, the best State recording studios available, official State venues, and media attention through television and radio promotion. Not incidentally, the job also paid extraordinarily well. Yuri Valov, of the Moscow band Winds of Change, abandoned his study of law when he realized he could make three times more money as a VIA member than as a lawyer. He then continued to play in the underground in his spare time. In this way, he both earned an outstanding living and retained some segment of individuality through rock and roll.⁴⁶

Herein lies the irony of Soviet VIAs. In the continued effort to control the ideological message expressed in its culture, the Soviet Union bribed underground bands to stop producing controversial material with Western instruments and technology. Implicit then is the acknowledgment by the State it could not match the quality of Western goods, a self-defeating admission that belies the whole point of attacking the subversive ideology of rock and roll in the first place. The Soviet population had long suspected that the West was much more technologically advanced than the USSR. With VIA, the State seemed to concede the point as well.

Conclusion - Techno-Irony

“The West was inherently subversive, because the vision of Western affluence undermined the Soviet regime.”⁴⁷

During the period of de-Stalinization, in the years 1957-1964, Bards of Discontent, acting in the historic tradition of the Russian guitar-bard, provided a framework of individual expression and demonstrated the cultural power of *magnitizdat* distribution. Then, from the emergence of the Beatles in 1964, through the early 1980s, millions of (mostly young) Soviets, revolting against official rock bans and State dictums on proper cultural consumption, grew addicted to the culture of the West, primarily experienced through underground rock and roll recordings. The effect was to destabilize the Communist indoctrination of the youth while simultaneously providing an alternative area of collective focus.

The Soviet government aided in this process in a physical way by distributing tape recorders, short-wave state-manufactured radios, and Western musical equipment. There is a key philosophical element in play here, as well. Technological modernity is a central tenet of Soviet ideology, first articulated by Lenin in the early 1920s. This view, in turn, was drilled into Soviet youth as part of their Communist indoctrination. As late as the early 1960s, the government repeatedly promised that within a generation, the Soviet Union would catch up to and surpass the United States. Yet, they never did, and because of the availability of Western culture, predominantly in the form of music and radio broadcasts from abroad, every Soviet citizen became aware by the 1970s of the vast technological advantage of the West. The government appeared to concede this point, if accidentally, in its efforts to co-opt Western rock and roll by promoting VIAs and supplying them with Western instruments and equipment. Could it be that the Soviet population

accepted the Communist premise that the key to a modern, successful society was technological modernity, and then grew to understand that the West had achieved it first? I contend that the Soviet people, exposed to Western culture with lots of inadvertent help from the Soviet government itself, did just that. Consequently, accepting that premise and realizing that the Soviet standard of living was getting farther, and not closer, to the bar set by the West, the Soviet population understood that the Soviet system contained a fatal flaw. They may not have known what exactly it was, or why it existed, but at some point, the Soviet population, with the help of rock and roll, realized the ironic truth: the State had convinced them that technological modernity was key to a successful society, and the West had beaten them to it, handily.

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American Press Coverage of Genocide in Cambodia: The “Ideological Blinders” that Led to a Failure in Public Responsibility

Amelia Evans

The overthrow of longtime authoritarian ruler Hosni Mubarak in Egypt has already been distinguished as 2011’s political event to remember. Americans watched, on the edge of their seats, as events unfolded in Cairo. Faced with the censorship of the print press, Egyptian protestors spread their message through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. The Egyptian government’s attempts to shut down the Internet in Egypt proved fruitless—too much information had already flooded the nation. In a post-9/11 world, Americans are more concerned than ever about the state of the Middle East, and have depended on the media to keep them informed. Revolutionized by the worldwide expansion of the Internet, the media now have a greater, and less regulated stake than ever in matters of national security. The media have always played a key role in the functioning of American democracy, carrying the responsibility to not only inform the public, but to also keep the government in check by serving as a “watchdog.” The traditional American press, however, has failed to fulfill its responsibilities at some critical points in history. In one particularly egregious case, that press failed to investigate one of the worst instances of genocide since the Holocaust.

On 17 April 1975, “Year Zero” began in Cambodia.¹ The Khmer Rouge, an extreme communist guerilla group led by the infamous Pol Pot, overtook the capital, Phnom Penh, and launched a four-year killing spree.² The capital’s two million inhabitants were forcibly evacuated to the countryside, where some were “fortunate” enough to be put to work in the rice fields. Buddhist monks and ethnic minorities were marked for elimination. Anyone who was deemed “contaminated” by western ideals was executed in the “killing fields,” but not before being tortured. Educated Cambodian citizens had to feign ignorance to survive. Children, believed by the Khmer Rouge to be “uncontaminated,” were brainwashed to become the brutal regime’s executioners. Those Cambodians who were not killed point blank faced starvation and exhaustion as forced laborers in the countryside. In the few dark years that the Khmer Rouge ruled over Cambodia, an estimated 1.2 to 2.3 million Cambodians—more than one-fifth of the country’s population—died at the hands of the merciless communist extremists who proclaimed, “To keep you is no benefit, to destroy you is no loss.”³

The haunting story of the Cambodian genocide raises the question, where was the United States while

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all this was happening? Why was the public not protesting in outrage? The simple answer is that the public did not know anything was wrong. The situation in Cambodia was rarely covered in American news publications, and when stories did appear, they were usually short, at the back of the international news section, and rarely mentioned genocide of any sort.⁴ In *"A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide"* (2002), Samantha Power attributes the absence of coverage on the Khmer Rouge to "Southeast Asia fatigue," as do most other historians on the subject. A careful analysis of the relevant articles from American periodicals from 1974 to 1990 reveals that this is not a sufficient explanation. This particular media malfeasance was also the result of American journalism being too political.

Cambodian correspondent Nate Thayer begins to hint at this idea in "Freelancers' Vital Role in International Reporting" (2001). Citing the absence of mainstream coverage on Cambodia and Afghanistan in the 1990s and 2000s, Thayer asserts, "a press free from the influence of any government" serves as "the backbone of international [news] coverage."⁵ Thayer focuses on the influence of commercial interests on journalism, however, and fails to explicitly address the equally significant influence of political bias on what journalists do and do not report. This essay shows that strong bipartisan influences significantly contrib-

⁴Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide"* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 110-11.

⁵Nate Thayer, "Freelancers' Vital Role in International Reporting," *Nieman Reports* 55, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 28. EBSCOhost.

uted to the American media's failure to fulfill its public responsibility in the case of the Cambodian genocide.

To understand why the American media should have ever been interested in the Khmer Rouge requires a brief summary of the United States' complex relationship with Cambodia. Cambodia is often forgotten in discussions of the Vietnam War, even though the small Southeast Asian nation's role in the conflict changed the course of history. Despite being declared a "neutral" country during the war between the United States and the Vietcong, Cambodia was a target for American bombers because its proximity to Vietnam made it a key part of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. "Operation Menu" began 9 March 1969, although some historians claim that the bombing began as early as 1965.⁶ From 1969 to 1973, Operations Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Dessert followed Operation Menu. During those five years, according to the Department of Defense, Cambodia became the "most heavily bombed country" in history.⁷ The American bombing of Cambodia resulted in from 150,000 to as many as 500,000 Cambodian civilian fatalities.⁸

As the United States finally began to withdraw from Southeast Asia in 1973, Cambodia was left to fend for itself. The Khmer Rouge, previously a small guerilla group with no real support, capitalized on Cambodia's politically vulnerable state. Cambodians frustrated

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with the United States' constant violations of neutrality, and the continuing unsatisfactory rule of the American-backed leader Lon Nol, joined forces with Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge seized the capital, encountering little resistance. As historian Ben Kiernan asserts, the United States' destabilization of Cambodia "was probably the most important single factor" in the rise of the Khmer Rouge.⁹

The American media, generally left leaning, should have had a field day with this information. The left's disillusionment with the American government in the wake of the Vietnam War and Watergate, however, led many journalists to dismiss, not just ignore, accounts of Khmer Rouge atrocities. In September 1975, the directors of the Antiwar Indochina Resource Center declared that any reports on the Khmer Rouge were examples of "conservative 'mythmaking,'" exaggerated to serve as Cold War propaganda.¹⁰ In the words of genocide historian Samantha Power, "The Nixon and Ford administrations had cried wolf one too many times in Southeast Asia."¹¹

Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman's 1977 article, "Distortions at Fourth Hand," published in the left-leaning publication *The Nation*, exemplifies the

⁹ Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia Under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-79* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 16, in Scott Laderman, "Burying Capability: *The Killing Fields* (1984), US Foreign Policy, and the Political Limits of Film-Making in Reagan-Era America," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 30, no.2 (June 2010), 208.

¹⁰ Power, *America and the Age of Genocide*, 112-13.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 103.

perspective of the left in regards to Cambodia during the 1970s. Although Chomsky and Herman acknowledge that Cambodia was facing a time of extreme suffering, they criticize less ideologically driven publications like *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *Time* for reporting Khmer Rouge crimes for which “there is no independent confirmatory evidence.”¹² Citing other liberal publications like *The Economist*, Chomsky and Herman declare that the evidence suggests, “Executions have numbered at most in the thousands.”¹³ They even go so far as to claim, “The ‘slaughter’ by the Khmer Rouge is a...*New York Times* creation.”¹⁴

Many other liberal journalists shared Chomsky and Herman’s skepticism, noting any inconsistent numbers “sometimes in a self-satisfied tone.”¹⁵ Douglas Zoloth Foster’s “Photos of ‘Horror’ in Cambodia: Fake or Real?” which appeared in *The Columbia Journalism Review* in 1978, explores the debate over the lack of information about the Khmer Rouge. Foster’s article specifically addresses controversial photos of “dubious standing” published in *The Washington Post* on 8 April 1977 and in the 21 November 1977 issue of *Time*.¹⁶ As Foster explains, critics raised questions about the authenticity of the photos when publishers could not provide full disclosure about the source of the photos,

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and admitted that they were only published “in good faith.”¹⁷ Indeed, all American accounts of what was going on in Cambodia were only speculative because the Khmer Rouge was incredibly secretive, successfully cutting off most of the country from any outside contact.¹⁸ The difficulty journalists faced in getting a firsthand look at the Khmer Rouge, as Power explains, “gave those inclined to look away further excuse for doing so.”¹⁹

A 14 June 1975 unsigned editorial from *The Nation* shows that leftist journalists significantly encouraged their American readers to be skeptical of reports of genocide as well. The author of this editorial, “Blood-Bath Talks,” is adamant that “the American people were propagandized about the menace of unrestrained slaughter in Indochina.”²⁰ The writer accuses the American government of seeking to stimulate “racist and ideological fears” by using alarmist reports from intelligence officials, reports that, conveniently, could never be proven.²¹ On the other hand, the writer points out, “No one could prove there was no blood bath—it is always impossible to prove a prediction.”²² Indeed, the American left in general had completely lost faith in American intelligence, and was especially distrustful of the American right, which interpreted events in Cambodia as the result of failing to defeat the “real enemy,” Vietnam.

¹⁷ Ibid., 47.

¹⁸ Power, *America and the Age of Genocide*, 103.

¹⁹ Ibid., 109.

²⁰ “Blood-Bath Talks,” Editorial, *Nation* 220, no. 23 (14 June 1975): 707. EBSCOhost.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

Chomsky and Herman also criticize less ideologically driven publications and the American right for failing to highlight “the crucial U.S. role, direct and indirect, in the torment, [however limited] that Cambodia has suffered.”²³ The United States, not the Khmer Rouge, is the real perpetrator in Cambodia according to Chomsky, Herman, and other leftists. Chomsky and Herman declare that the real crime at hand is the “all-too-typical reporting which excises from history the American role in turning peaceful Cambodia into a land of massacre, starvation and disease.”²⁴ Indeed, the United States’ actions did, undeniably, lift the Khmer Rouge up to power. By focusing on a grudge with the American government, however, journalists on the left failed to recognize the real horror at hand.

American journalists on the right were not without fault either. In his memoir, *Prince of Darkness: 50 Years Reporting in Washington*, Robert Novak, a conservative journalist for *The Wall Street Journal*, admits that when he was in Cambodia in 1970, he and other journalists already “saw an endless procession of dead bodies—thousands of them—floating down the river.”²⁵ Novak and his colleagues “thus learned of a genocidal slaughter in the process.” The bodies he saw were those of ethnic Vietnamese, a minority in Cambo-

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dia. Novak attributes the killings to Lon Nol's "exhorting the populace to patriotic fervor against intruding Communist Vietnamese troops." "The populace," Novak explains, "turned on their...[ethnic] Vietnamese neighbors." The beginning genocide went underreported, in part, because the victims were Vietnamese, a people that Americans, especially right-wing Americans, identified as the enemy.

It should be noted that articles recognizing Khmer Rouge atrocities did appear more often in conservative publications like *The National Review* than in liberal periodicals.²⁶ In one 1977 unsigned editorial in *The National Review*, a writer openly criticizes left-leaning journalists for focusing on the fault of the United States and the corruption of the American-backed Lon Nol government, rather than the crimes of the Khmer Rouge.²⁷ In general, however, conservative journalists, like most government officials, saw the Khmer Rouge merely as an extension of the "real enemy": Vietnam.²⁸ In other words, conservatives did not see the Khmer Rouge as being any more threatening than any other communists. In the words of Samantha Power, "the myth of monolithic communism died hard."²⁹ In the larger context of the Cold War, conservatives saw the Khmer Rouge guerillas as much less of a threat than Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

So while the left explicitly dismissed Khmer Rouge crimes, the right simply ignored them. After Vietnam overtook Phnom Penh on 7 January 1979, ending the

²⁶ As revealed by searches on EBSCOhost.

²⁷ "Exit Laughing," Editorial, *National Review* 29, no. 20 (14 Oct. 1977), 1164. EBSCOhost.

²⁸ Power, *America and the Age of Genocide*, 90.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

Khmer Rouge's reign of terror, right-wing Americans actually spoke out in support of the recently ousted Khmer Rouge. Foreign service officer Charles Twining dolefully explained: "Those of us who knew about the Khmer Rouge cheered, but we quickly realized that everyone else just heard it as 'Vietnam, our enemy, has taken over Cambodia.'" ³⁰ Indeed, "no voices cried out to support Vietnam." ³¹ Instead, right-wing activists like Jack Wheeler advocated in 1984 that the return of the Khmer Rouge would actually be a good thing for the world. Should the Soviet-backed Vietnam fail in Cambodia, Wheeler argued, then perhaps there would be "a 'reverse domino effect,' a toppling of Soviet dominos, one after the other." ³² Then, as the right hoped, the United States could gain an even bigger edge in the Cold War.

Articles were few and far between about the Khmer Rouge becoming "a U.S. ally twice removed," receiving millions in indirect aid after Vietnam invaded in 1979. ³³ As Power reveals, "For neither the first nor the last time, geopolitics trumped genocide. Interests trumped indignation." ³⁴ Unfortunately, the American media facilitated these events. Blinded by political

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grudges, both the left and right failed to recognize a new kind of genocide unlike any other in the world's history. This new genocide has been classified as "auto-genocide," where people kill their very own; as CBS correspondent Jarrett Murphy succinctly states, this applied to what happened in Cambodia because "Cambodians did the killing and the dying."³⁵

A critical point for the American press came in 1974, with Elizabeth Becker's *Washington Post* article, "Who Are the Khmer Rouge?" Becker was the first journalist to report on the Khmer Rouge in the mainstream media. Although Becker's article did not warn of genocide explicitly, it did "suggest that life under [Khmer Rouge] rule would not be fun."³⁶ The reception to Becker's article highlights the danger of strong bipartisan influences in the American media. Unsurprisingly, the right reacted to her article with accusations that Becker naively believed the Khmer Rouge was not just a puppet of Vietnam. Vietnam, conservatives emphasized, should still be the real concern.³⁷ On the other end of the political spectrum, the left claimed that Becker's article was based on the hysteric warnings of the Central Intelligence Agency, an organization not to be trusted. Although Becker's article was a relatively good example of objective, factual reporting based on eyewitness accounts, the beginning of an investigation into the truth about the Khmer Rouge was lost to a political grudge match.

³⁵ James Murphy, "Remembering the Killing Fields," *CBS News*, 15 April 2000, <<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2000/04/15/world/main184477.shtml>> (25 Jan. 2011).

³⁶ Power, *America and the Age of Genocide*, 99.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

William Safire hits the mark in his 1979 *New York Times* essay, "The Blame Passers." He notes that as more evidence emerged in support of the claim that genocide was occurring in Cambodia, many journalists became "frantic."³⁸ "Too many people fear being blamed themselves for a horror they did not foresee, and are desperately launching a pre-emptive media strike against those they fear will be their accusers," Safire explains. Addressing both the left and the right as "blame passers," he issues the challenge, "No longer can the murder of millions be attributed to gentle Cambodian leaders we 'brutalized;' no longer can the persecution of the boat people be blamed in any way on American non-recognition of Hanoi." The bottom line, Safire charges, is that "the blame belongs to the murderers." Indeed, the press wasted time trying to place the blame on anyone other than Pol Pot and other Khmer Rouge officials. The blame game within the American media got in the way of seeing the true horror at hand.

In "Distortions at Fourth Hand," Chomsky and Herman unintentionally provide insight into the mistakes of the American press regarding Cambodia. Accusing writers of *The Christian Science Monitor* and other less ideologically driven publications of "[selecting] what they wanted to believe," when reporting Khmer Rouge atrocities, Chomsky and Herman fail to realize that they made that exact mistake themselves.³⁹ In fact, Chomsky and Herman mistakenly grouped

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more neutral publications together with those on the right, suggesting that both moderates and conservatives consciously elected to deemphasize the role of the United States in Cambodia's suffering. The reality is that emphasizing the fault of the United States also did no good. Instead, domestic finger pointing by both sides detracted from any action that might have been taken against the Khmer Rouge. Less ideologically driven publications were not wrong in sticking to reporting the most pressing news.

Like Thayer, Noam and Chomsky claim that it is a "fair generalization" that less ideologically driven publications prioritize commercial interests to reach the widest audience, and should therefore not be taken too seriously.⁴⁰ Although this point carries some truth, it detracts from the real lesson of the mistakes of the American press during the Cambodian genocide: political grudges obscure the truth. Noam and Chomsky actually articulate this problem with the phrase, "ideological blinders," but they did not recognize its role in their own biased reporting.⁴¹

As the case of the Cambodian genocide shows, the consequences of the media's mistakes based in political bias can be severe. Although less ideologically driven publications created some awareness of Cambodia's plight during the 1970s, the bipartisan nature of journalism ultimately overpowered any influence these more moderate publications might have had. The American media should adopt the slogan of the worldwide anti-genocide campaign, and proclaim, "Never again." As a key element of American democracy, all

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 789.

media, including the print press, has an obligation to not allow a particular political opinion to dictate its coverage and subvert the truth. It is critical that the media, including the new social media, report dispassionately because it is only through thorough, objective reporting that the government is held most accountable. Such reporting can give rise to significant policy changes. Government officials respect, even fear, the power of the media to hold them accountable for their actions. The media carries a great public responsibility. Beyond that, however, the press also carries a moral responsibility, an obligation to demand help for those who cannot advocate for themselves. Journalists should remember the killing fields, and put aside political vendettas in order to focus on real injustice.

American readers should also learn from the press's failed response to the rise of the Khmer Rouge. Readers need to be ever vigilant concerning the source of their news, and consider what motives the person reporting it might have. This lesson is especially relevant in the Internet age, when anyone can go online and write what he or she wishes. There are fewer and fewer filters for bias, more potential than ever for news to be presented only through the perspectives of those on the furthest ends of the political spectrum. At the same time, this wide variety of unfiltered viewpoints has the potential to serve as the remedy to, as well as the cause of, political problems, as in the recent case of Egypt. Ultimately, the public must be aware that it now has an increased responsibility for discernment in evaluating media accounts, and in holding the media accountable. These lessons

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in combination might even one day put an early stop to a future genocide.

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Rights for the Ladies of the Night: Race, Gender, and Prostitution in Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill

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On November 6, 2002 hundreds of prostitutes protested outside the French Senate, chanting the slogans on their banners: "You sleep with us! You vote against us! Sarko, Free the hookers!"¹ This demonstration was in response to their Minister of the Interior, current president, Nicolas Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill. This bill placed new limitations on prostitutes and furthered the criminalization of their actions even though the exchange of sex for money is legal in France.²

Beginning in the 1940s, French policy has moved away from its historically regulationist policy towards a rigid abolitionist prostitution policy. Regulationism is a system in which prostitution is restricted but allowed. It may be limited by zoning or registration laws.³ Regulationist systems are currently in use in Denmark and the Netherlands. France had a regulationist system up until 1946. Abolitionism is a system that prohibits all regulation and recognizes the prostitute's right to choose the work she does. In the

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abolitionist system, prostitution itself is legal while activities surrounding prostitution, such as pimping and the coercion of women into prostitution are illegal.⁴ Abolitionism is the system currently in place in France and is endorsed by the United Nations. Prohibitionism is a system which outlaws prostitution.⁵ This system is currently in place in the United States.

The American presence in France at the end of World War II was the catalyst for the shift to abolitionist policy. This began in August 1944 with the American liberation of Paris. American armies publicly condemned the moral depravity and public health risks that legal brothels posed to their troops, while privately allowing their soldiers to frequent these establishments.⁶

Since signing of the 1949 UN Convention on the Suppression of Traffic in Persons in 1960, France has continually tried to define its prostitution policy to conform to external pressures. Most recently, this has been seen in Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill (2003). The Domestic Security Bill shifted the war on prostitution to focus on prosecuting prostitutes instead of third party beneficiaries and property owners who aid prostitutes by supplying workspace.⁷ This is achieved by criminalizing "passive solicitation." The elasticity of France's 2003 legislation allows for arrests based on

⁴ Ibid, 118.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Mary Louise Roberts, "The Silver Foxhole: The GIs and Prostitution in Paris, 1944-1945," *French Historical Studies* Vol. 33, No. 1 (Winter 2010), 99-128.

⁷ Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia, *Gender and Policy in France* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 113.

racialized and gendered profiling. As France continues to conform to international policy trends, French universalism cannot be preserved while their current laws regarding prostitution act as a vehicle for racialized exclusion. In French political theory, universalism advocates for equality by “making one’s social, religious, ethnic and other origins irrelevant in the public sphere; it is as an abstract individual that one becomes a French citizen.”⁸ Due to the borders in the European Union (EU) becoming more fluid with the increase of EU member states, France’s justification for conforming to international law is valid. However, the 2003 Domestic Security Bill allows for women to be determined suspects based on whether or not they fit into the physical markers of French national identity. This sort of profiling is currently commonplace in France, where an estimated fifty percent of prostitutes are not French born.⁹ It reinforces the idea that assimilation into the French national identity is impossible for people who appear foreign.

Many historians have researched the connection between French prostitution and the changing legality due to foreign influences. Mary Louise Roberts discusses French prostitution policy and the presence of foreign armies in “The Silver Foxhole: The GIs and Prostitution in Paris, 1944- 1945,” and “The Price of Discretion: Prostitution, Venereal Disease, and the American Military in France 1944-1946.”¹⁰ Both works

analyze the impact of German and American troops on the changing legality of activities surrounding prostitution in France. They also analyze how foreign pressure eroded the original French policies of regulationism that were in place before and during World War II. Roberts contextualizes the French establishment of a legacy of adopting foreign law in their own battle against prostitution. However, Roberts' critiques focus solely on prostitution policy before the 1950s and thus they lack reference to contemporary contexts.

Gill Allwood's and Khursheed Wadia's *Gender and Policy in France* examines how women's issues and legislation interact in France, specifically from the 1990s to the present.¹¹ Allwood focuses on how prostitution was transformed into a law and order issue with the Domestic Security Bill of 2003 and how France has passed legislation to reflect the trend of abolitionist policy in neighboring countries. Defining prostitution as a law and order issue is problematic because the selling of sex for money is legal in France. In a globalized economy, this is an important angle to reference because human trafficking occurs in international crime networks which make legislation limited to a single nation ineffective if neighboring nations do not participate in similar policies. Allwood also mentions the difference between "traditional" and "foreign" prostitutes in regards to how the legislation is implemented and who ends up arrested. Her argument frames the Domestic Security Bill as legislation which disadvantages all prostitutes regardless of citizenship status.

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¹¹ Allwood and Wadia.

Last, Miram Ticktin's "Sexual Violence as the Language of Border Control: Where French Feminist and Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric Meet" examines how French laws related to the banning of the headscarf and prostitution are framed as efforts to protect women but deny them agency and limit their autonomy in the French nation.¹² It is assumed that women of immigrant origin can only be coerced into prostitution and thus the state acts as a parental figure, "saving" the victims who have no agency of their own. Ticktin concludes that difference in France is more easily deported rather than assimilated into the French nation.

This paper argues that the Nazi occupation of France and the American liberation were the beginning of French prostitution policy conforming to foreign standards, a legacy which continues to today. The relaxation of borders in the EU has been used by Sarkozy and the French government as a justification for France's attempts to increase domestic security through a variety of legislation which target immigrants and those who do not fit neatly into what is representative of French national identity. France's current prostitution policy is posed as part of the plan to achieve greater domestic security, particularly by "saving" the foreign born women who are assumed to be coerced into the profession. The government's current narrative on prostitution is both gendered and racialized and ignores women's agency and the ideal of

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universalism on which French national identity is founded.

Until 1946, France was marked by over a century of regulationist prostitution policy. Policy did not remain stagnant during these years but the use of *maisons closes* (state registered brothels) and a registry of prostitutes was a consistent element of French policy. Surveillance began in 1778 when women were registered with the vice squad.¹³ The registration system spread when Napoleon linked it to medical exams.¹⁴ Overall, the registration system was a response to the growing number of prostitutes traveling with Napoleon's army camps.

The regulationist system remained unaltered until World War II. Regulation continued in the war years but came under new authority during the Nazi occupation of France. The already existing system of regulation was absorbed by the Germans. However, unlike the original French system, prostitution under the Nazi occupation was supervised by military authority. All known prostitutes were forced to join the system so their health could be monitored. This was reinforced by the mandatory incarceration of any prostitute found guilty of contaminating a German soldier.¹⁵

In 1944, the system of regulation changed due to an enormous influx of customers: the American GIs. The regulationist system the Germans left behind was already deteriorating following the Germans' departure. Many of the pimps and madams whose businesses had flourished during the Nazi occupation were

¹³ Allwood and Wadia, *Gender and Policy*, 105

¹⁴ Scibelli, "Empowering Prostitutes," 146.

¹⁵ Ibid.

now accused of having collaborated with the Germans to obtain black market goods.¹⁶ This distrust manifested itself in many ways such as publicly shaving the heads of women who were believed to have slept with Germans during the Occupation.¹⁷ Whether they had or not, the mere accusation of collaboration severely damaged the reputation of *maisons closes* and the regulationist system as a whole.

From the onset of the ensuing occupation of France by American troops, the United States remained determined to reject the French system of regulation to maintain a visage of morality for the sake of the American public. It was American policy not to allow prostitution in their army camps abroad. This was established in 1941 when the U.S. Congress passed the May Act to prohibit prostitution near American army camps.¹⁸ Yet this act proved nearly impossible to enforce when troops were fighting in foreign lands where prostitution was established and, in many cases, accepted. The same held true in France. However, the French situation emerged as unique because France was both technically a wartime ally but also an occupied territory, thus confusing the lines of who had the power to implement public policy, in this case prostitution policy. Publicly condemning the regulationist system gave the American military the moral reputation they desired but they paid the price with the health of their troops. Venereal disease was

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the largest non-combat medical problem suffered by GIs.¹⁹

By refusing to facilitate army specific brothels, the American army changed the sex work industry in France. Registered state brothels still existed but they were largely inaccessible to American troops. Women moved their work onto the streets where they worked alone and had no network of protection. Registration and brothels gave women police contacts and the safety of working with other women. Suddenly there was no need to register and even less need to receive medical services. To further complicate matters, many of the prostitutes were not Parisians and thus had no friends or family to turn to while working in Paris. Arrest records during the American occupation indicate that only 19% of prostitutes working on the streets of Paris were born in Paris. Many had emigrated from rural French towns, Belgium, Poland, Germany or French colonies.²⁰ As the number of Americans grew in France, more women immigrated to towns surrounding American army camps and Paris in the hopes of earning money for survival in the difficult postwar years. Lower class women and especially immigrant women had few employment options because the war had decimated Europe's economy.

The shift from brothels to the street resulted in a dramatic increase in American soldiers' venereal-disease infection rates. In February 1945, an army survey reported that an estimated "44 percent of GIs contracted venereal diseases from 'casual street meetings,' as opposed to five percent who contract them in

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Roberts, "The Silver Foxhole," 109.

brothels.”²¹ It was obvious that the lack of medical regulation resulted in greater rates of infection, but the American anti-regulationist stance persisted. American forces blamed the French for the problem of contagion but gave them no power to address the issue.

The rise in venereal disease rates inspired American condemnation and was used as an excuse for the American army to assert its right to dictate policy for the French civilian population.²² In places of large army occupations such as the port of Le Havre, municipal authorities were exhausting their annual budgets due to the cost of hospitalizing all the infected prostitutes. One official reported that it cost 8.5 million francs to run the local clinics in Le Havre during the American occupation.²³ None of these prostitutes were registered because American forces refused to allow official army brothels to be established. As a result, these women received little medical care, and infected women could not be tracked since they were not registered.

Without brothels, prostitutes in Le Havre were forced to conduct their business on the streets. This exposed the gritty realities of the prostitution business to many French citizens. The visibility of prostitution during the American occupation is a metaphor for the public humiliation France was suffering while trying to gain their own autonomy from their liberators. Paris, and France as a whole, was recognized by the Americans not for its culture but for its sex industry, the

rules of which were easily ignored and quickly overturned by the American liberators of France.

As American forces finally began withdrawal in 1946, the damage done to the regulationist system was irreparable. Prostitutes had become used to a system without registration and saw no reason to revert back to the old system. There was widespread public disapproval of prostitution because it had moved onto the streets instead of being contained in brothels. Furthermore, the French sought to publicly condemn the prostitute who had become a symbol of collaboration (with the Germans) and a loss of French autonomy (with the Americans). France felt a loss of autonomy because during the American occupation, the French government had no control over implementing their prostitution policy in the areas surrounding American army camps. On April 20, 1946, The "Loi Marthe Richard" officially closed the 1,500 state recognized brothels in France. Article 1 stated that "all *maisons de tolerance* are forbidden throughout the national territory."²⁴ The law represented the French state officially taking a stand against prostitution but it by no means eliminated the sex industry. The act of prostitution remained legal but all surrounding activities were criminalized. Instead, it further marginalized already disadvantaged women. Prostitutes had to move all their business onto the street where they usually worked alone and thus were more susceptible to violence. In response to the law, Articles 334 and 335 of the Penal Code were changed so that soliciting and procuring now resulted in a heavy fine. Other changes included the following: men could be punished for

²⁴ Corbin, *Women for Hire*, 348.

protecting or helping women to prostitute themselves, receiving income from a prostitute, living with a prostitute while being unable to account for money of his own and for “running or managing an establishment of prostitution or who habitually tolerate the presence of one or several prostitutes.”²⁵ The bill was passed with little debate because it was framed as legislation which would aid in national defense because prostitutes were associated with the memory of collaboration. The registration file on prostitutes also remained although now it was defined as register of information used to “combat venereal diseases and public immorality.”²⁶

In July of 1960, France ratified the 1949 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of The Traffic in Persons and of The Exploitation of The Prostitution of Others. It marked the final step in France’s abandonment of its regulationist past and ushered in the trend of French prostitution policy conforming to the policy of the world community. At the time of ratification, France was the last remaining regulationist system in Western Europe. French prostitution policy was now defined as abolitionist. The move to abandon the regulationist system led to the destruction of all remaining prostitution registration documents, which had been kept between 1946 and 1960 for the purpose of police information. As keeping this register implied the continued use of registration information, it was not until 1960, when these registration documents were destroyed, that France could be considered abolitionist. Ratification of the Convention led French

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authorities to transition former surveillance forces into social service providers which were meant to reeducate and assist in prostitutes' "rehabilitation." The rhetoric of the Convention stipulated that the greatest service the state could provide to prostitutes were the tools to reenter the workforce with a reputable occupation. The Convention also denied that women possessed any agency in their choice of prostitution as a profession. Procuring was illegal even if the prostitute gave consent to the procurer. Though the Convention attempted to remain gender neutral with the title "Traffic in Persons" in Article 20 the convention calls for the "supervision of employment agencies in order to present persons seeking employment, in particular women and children, from being exposed to the dangers of prostitution."²⁷ Language such as this highlights then gendered nature of the Convention. Women, like children, needed special supervision and protection, an idea that is contradictory to a France rooted in universalism. However, the language kept with the logic of French political culture and regulation, both which reflected that women needed special consideration and supervision in the law. The treatment of women in the Convention is perhaps unsurprising when one considers that French women were only granted the right to vote after World War II.²⁸

The ratification of the Convention gave an overwhelmingly male police force the power to arbitrarily punish prostitution as they saw fit. The majority of

²⁷ General Assembly resolution 317 (IV) of 2 December 1949, UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Person and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

²⁸ Allwood and Wadia, *Gender and Policy*, 63.

prostitutes were arrested on technical offenses such as “solicitation” and “conduct likely to debauch.”²⁹ The severity of the enforcement of arresting procurers and prostitutes varied from city to city.³⁰ In Paris, nearly two hundred prostitutes would be bused to Saint-Lazare every night, but now, instead of forced medical exams, they would receive access to social services.³¹ Prostitutes were caught in an unusual bind because their occupation was legal but many of their activities were illegal under Article 6 of the French Civil Code. This code stated, “Laws involving public order and good morals cannot be derogated from by private matters.”³²

Prostitution reappeared on the national political agenda in 1994 when the Penal Code underwent major reform.³³ Harsher penalties for large-scale pimping and international trafficking by organized crime groups were instated while increased protection of male clients and individual pimps was granted.³⁴ These reforms assumed gender-neutral language derived from the tradition of republican universalism “where all individuals are defined in terms of formal equality before the law.”³⁵ Republican universalism and individualism has remained an important factor in policy

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formation since the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789). By emphasizing “human sameness” an essential essence of man could be extracted which would provide the foundation for thinking about political equality regardless of factors such as birth, wealth, occupation and property which led to the political inequality before the French Revolution and resulted in the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen to ensure equality in the future.³⁶ This foundation makes it difficult to draft gender-specific language into law and policy. The language of gender-neutrality in universalism recurrently hides the gender-bias implicit in these laws. In the case of prostitution, the gender-neutral language in policy distracts from the gender bias expressed by “portraying women prostitutes as sexual objects, minors or victims, or by failing to focus on male clients as criminals.”³⁷

This contradiction in policy and language can be likened to the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. The Convention also assumed a gender-neutral approach, following in the same perspective of universalism, but contradicted the language with a policy that suggested that women, like children, needed special protection because as women they were naturally in a vulnerable state. In 1991, Socialist Deputy Minister of Justice, Michel Sapin affirmed that little had changed in forty years when he stated, “Women’s particular situation is taken into

³⁶ Joan Wallach Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 5.

³⁷ Mazur, “Prostitutes Movements,” 137.

consideration in cases where, for objective reasons it is necessary to do so... Vulnerability which comes from the state of pregnancy is obviously unique to women.”³⁸

The idea of an “abstract individual” was seemingly constructed to create a unifying set of characteristics shared by all people in order to delineate the human components necessary for a person to be considered a rights bearing citizen. According to French political theory, equality can only be accomplished by making one’s personal identifiers, such as social, religious, ethnic, gender and other origins irrelevant in the public sphere.³⁹ Women are thus excluded from access into the category of abstract individual as women because of their various “particular situations” which deny them gender-neutrality under the law. The irreducible differences of biological sex prohibit any hope of achieving the “sameness” necessary to fit into the category of French citizen.⁴⁰ No matter how neutral the language, biological determinism placed women into a separate category in the minds of policy makers and this is reflected in policy formation. Prostitution policy has perpetuated this legacy by continuing to punish the sellers of sex through incarceration, policy harassment, heavy fines, and heavy taxes, while men, the consumers, remain untouched by the criminalization of prostitution. Such a system ignores the fact that the only reason female prostitutes can sell their services is because male clients continue to act as customers.

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Ultimately, the Penal Code reforms of 1994 kept their gender-bias approach although they did take into account the proposal made by the Ministry of the Rights of Women in the 1980s which called for a definition of pimping that would “prevent the police from arresting the companions of prostitutes.”⁴¹ This was one of the issues that prostitutes’ rights groups had continually raised because the arresting of men they lived with was seen as an invasion of privacy. The new Penal Code also eliminated the small fine incurred by woman accused of passive soliciting. These laws allowed for gender norming of the female-male, prostitute-client relationship because arrests focused solely on jailing female prostitutes.

Various forms of compromise and cooperation between policy makers and women’s rights groups were characteristic of the prostitution debates in the early 1990s. A decade later, such compromise had become almost impossible due to the polarization of public debate on prostitution. The polarizing of the debate resulted from a growing awareness of the problem of prostitution in France. First, the presence of East European and African prostitutes was a visible indicator to the public that immigration for the purpose of prostitution was occurring in France.⁴² Second, international groups and Europe as whole were increasing their focus on ways to combat transnational trafficking and particularly child prostitution and child pornography in connection with organized crime. Third, a general increase in immigration to France

⁴¹ Mazur, “Prostitutes Movements,” 139.

⁴² Ibid, 107.

made the movement of people for the purpose of labor an important issue in French politics.

Following the elections of a right-wing president and parliamentary majority, a political climate of law and order influenced public policy in 2002.⁴³ Nicolas Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill was put to a vote in October 2002 and after success in both houses of Parliament, it was enacted in March 2003. The bill was presented as a measure to combat insecurity in the public domain. Behaviors that needed to be combated were "soliciting, exploitation of begging, aggressive begging, occupying someone else's land [squatting], and assembling in the entrance or the stairwell of blocks of flats [loitering]."⁴⁴ Critics of this legislation accused Sarkozy of further stigmatizing the most excluded members of society: prostitutes and beggars.⁴⁵

Sarkozy's bill addressed prostitution in three parts. Article 18 criminalized *racolage passif* (passive soliciting) and prohibited clients from purchasing services from a "particularly vulnerable person."⁴⁶ The law allows for police to arrest, fine and jail any woman "whose dress or attitude gives the impression that she is soliciting money for sex."⁴⁷ Jail sentences could be up to two months and fines up to 3,750 euros, about 5,176 US dollars. Article 28 allowed for the government to revoke a visitor's permit from any foreigner accused of soliciting.⁴⁸ Article 29 allowed for a for-

eigner convicted of soliciting to remain in France under the condition that the prostitute revealed the name of her pimp, brought charges against him or testified against him. Only if her pimp was convicted could she remain in the country permanently.⁴⁹

All three of the articles dealing with prostitution have a gender and race component. Article 18 can be arbitrarily enforced by any police officer based on what characteristics they use to label someone a prostitute. The first characteristic is gender. The outward appearance of simply being a woman acted as a qualifier for arrest since criminalization of prostitution has always focused on penalizing female prostitutes. The second characteristic is race or ethnicity. Sarkozy made foreign prostitutes the specific target of this law when he stated in the French Senate, "It seems wise to escort girls who do not speak our language and who have just arrived in our country back to their country of origin in order to release them from the grasp of their pimps. It is a humanitarian duty!"⁵⁰ Sarkozy's statement referred to all female immigrants as "girls" rather than acknowledging that consenting adults participate in the business of prostitution. His argument was rooted in a paternalistic view and thus framed women as fragile and in need of protection by the state. His anti-immigration agenda was explicitly stated when he suggested that the best measure to protect immigrant women was simply to deport them. He also mentioned their inability to speak French, a characteristic that had been used in the past to depict the "otherness" of individuals who did not fit into the

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ticktin, "Sexual Violence," 868.

French national identity and thus could not be considered rights-bearing citizens. Sarkozy's measures to protect immigrant women framed them as a homogeneous group and did not consider the fact that women possessed varying degrees of agency. Furthermore, abolitionist measures such as Sarkozy's simply decrease the visibility of prostitution, causing prostitutes to take their business further underground where they have less protection. The law worked directly against its objective of protecting women.

In response to the Domestic Security Bill, prostitutes took to the streets with signs, chanting slogans: "You sleep with us! You vote against us! Six months in prison for a smile! Gigolo Sarkozy, you're giving the fascists a hard on!" and "Sarko, free the hookers. We're legal. Leave us alone!"⁵¹ Foreign prostitutes were notably underrepresented in the protests because they were afraid of being identified as illegals and deported. His efforts to "protect women" resulted in a police state environment where officers had the freedom to increase identity checks of foreign women they believed were prostitutes. The aim of protecting women was a way to vaguely conceal Sarkozy's anti-immigration politics.

The Domestic Security Bill must be viewed in light of a larger movement in French policy to specifically target immigrants and others deemed as outsiders. The most obvious example of this is the 2004 ban on "ostentatious signs of religious affiliation in public schools—the focus of which is the *hijab*, or

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headscarf.”⁵² Like the banning of the *hijab*, Article 18, Article 28 and Article 29 of the Domestic Security Bill signal out immigrant women based on their appearance. These articles allow for ethnic and racial profiling by police officers who suspect women of prostitution. Their ethnicity becomes an irreducible difference which denies them equal protection under French policy.

Sarkozy’s focus on “saving” foreign women “facing degrading encounters night after night” also ignored the poor conditions of the ethnically French prostitute, who were also forced to move their business into more hidden environments to avoid fines and incarceration. Even though Sarkozy depicted French prostitutes as unproblematic to public order, his bill worsened their conditions and decreased their police protection.⁵³ *Liberation*, a leftist French newspaper, quoted a prostitute who said, “Before when we saw a police car, we felt reassured. The clients knew that we had good relations with them. Now, as soon as we see the officers, we hide. The clients have understood that we are no longer protected, and they do what they want.”⁵⁴ Following the 2003 bill, data collected by police, prostitute support groups and journalists reports indicated that with no police protection, clients had become more violent.⁵⁵

Because ethnically French prostitutes are also being jailed and fined, they have blamed foreign prostitutes for the increased restrictions on their work.

⁵² Ticktin, “Sexual Violence,” 869.

⁵³ Allwood and Wadia, *Gender and Policy*, 117.

⁵⁴ Blandine Grosjean, “Des filles de Joie Bien a la peine,” *Liberation* (June 3, 2003) Paris.

⁵⁵ Allwood and Wadia, *Gender and Policy*, 123.

Animosity between French prostitutes and foreign prostitutes has increased. Claude Boucher, a spokesperson for *Bus des Femmes*, a prostitutes' advocacy group, stated in a 2002 interview that "traditional prostitutes and these slaves are completely different. Traditional prostitutes did not come into prostitution because it was their dream job, but that doesn't make them victims. If they have made this difficult choice, it is in order to escape the indignity of poverty."⁵⁶ This statement demonstrates how marginalized foreign prostitutes have become under the Domestic Security Bill because they are unable to ally with ethnically French prostitutes. It also showed how *Bus de Femmes*, an organization which advocates granting prostitutes agency to choose their own work, viewed foreign prostitutes simply as slaves. Boucher's comments ignore the fact that foreign prostitutes enter prostitution for the same reasons as French prostitutes, to avoid the indignity of poverty.

It was not until 2003 that the French government, led by then Minister of the Interior Sarkozy, chose to focus policy on prostitutes rather than the business of prostitution. In the name of national security, Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill criminalized passive solicitation and therefore allowed for police to arbitrarily identify who was suspect of this offense. This shift reflected attitudes towards gender, race and immigration. Its passing is significant because it reveals how immigration and French national identity interact in the modern context.

Sarkozy's Domestic Security Bill highlights the ongoing problem of incorporating foreigners into

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French national identity. Sarkozy made clear on the Senate floor that his bill was designed to “save” the foreign “girls” who were forced into prostitution rather than target French prostitutes. Thus he acknowledged that police officers should be able to tell, based on appearance alone, which women were citizens and which women were foreigners. His assertion ignored the fact that racial and ethnic profiling would undoubtedly result in the arrest of women who appeared foreign but were in fact French citizens. This speaks considerably to the role appearance still plays in constructing the criteria of French national identity. Though French universalism calls for leaving behind one’s personal identifiers and being a French citizen before all else, the visual markers of French national identity do not leave behind these factors.

The notion of paternalism implicit in Sarkozy’s objective of saving foreign women implied that foreign women have no agency. Unlike French women, his rhetoric claimed that foreign women cannot make the choice to enter prostitution. Instead of granting them freedom, the Domestic Security Bill categorized foreign women as a group which inherently has no autonomy over their own bodies. Additionally, the focus on foreign women suggests that the condition of French prostitutes need not be considered. It allows for a prostitution policy that forced all prostitutes, including French, to move their business further into the periphery of society thus rendering them illegitimate even though the exchange of sex for money is legal France. Focusing on the need to save foreign prostitutes allows the French government to ignore calls to improve the conditions of prostitutes who are citizens. Until all women are recognized as autonomous individuals

regardless of race, ethnicity and citizenship, France will struggle to incorporate women into the category of active citizen. Therefore the aims of liberal political theory and French universalism are obstructed by legislation such as the Domestic Security Bill of 2003.

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